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Antiquities & Scenery
OF
the North of
S C O T L A N D,

in a Series of Letters,

TO

THOMAS PENNANT, Esq.

By the Rev.^d Cha.^s Cordiner, Minister of S.^t Andrew's Chapel,

BAMFF.



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ANTIQUITIES AND SCENERY,

OF

The North of SCOTLAND.

LETTER I.

Banff, May 25th, 1776.

THE antiquities and scenery of the North, which you mention as such excellent subjects for drawing, every day more and more attract my attention: the point of view in which you place them, as useful appendages to your Tours, makes the idea of delineating them yield me an interesting pleasure.

I look on it as a fortunate event, that the few of my drawings which made their way to you, should have gained so much of your notice, as to occasion a correspondence which is so flattering and agreeable to me. It is of much importance to those who may command their time, to have their thoughts directed into some useful channel; and I am very sensible how greatly your favours have in this way enlivened my leisure hours.

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I BEG

INTRODUCTORY

I BEG to add the account of this journey, as a Supplement to your Tours ; and thus to attempt fulfilling your wish, of drawing out of its obscurity the remotest parts of our country. Should I be fortunate enough to execute your commands with approbation, it will doubtless be to me a spring of much entertainment and pleasure.

By this declaration you will easily discover, that I gladly accept your invitation, and am fond to embrace so favourable an opportunity, of paying a general visit to the more unfrequented parts of the *North* : but at the same time must add, that I do so with the greatest diffidence of being at all qualified, for executing your orders with any tolerable perspicuity. I have not however spared any pains that could possibly give me a chance for enjoying the ramble in a more rational and satisfactory manner : and to become acquainted with the *Caledonian* annals, has been an object of my best attention.

THE path which you have more particularly prescribed to me, in that ample field which you have been pervading, appears altogether a romantic, and far from an unpleasant one. You may depend upon it, that neither resolution nor perseverance shall be wanting in my endeavours to penetrate into the deepest recesses of the northern mountains : and I trust to send, from the wild environs of *Dornadilla*, some authentic representations of the majestic scenery and singular buildings of that remote corner.

THE idea of having an opportunity of examining those specimens of architecture, which are of such high antiquity, gives additional importance to the attempt of making a journey through these wilds. And the existence of any carved monumental

mental stones set up in the early ages of *christianity*, is likewise what I shall think myself seriously concerned to investigate, though it lead me ever so far from the ordinary path of travellers.

THOSE ruins on the way, to which you particularly bend my attention, shall be faithfully copied in some of their most expressive views. The necessity I shall thus be under, of being much conversant with the remains of deserted temples, and palaces renowned of old, promises a fund of solemn meditation: and it will greatly dignify my labours, to reflect, that in these drawings I shall deliver over to you as their preserver, the most venerable and ancient monuments of the nation's former grandeur.

WHATEVER memorable occurs, with respect to the subjects of any of the drawings, shall be communicated with freedom. I propose to myself no small pleasure from doing so: for I am convinced, that my indulgence in that, will greatly heighten every other entertainment which the jaunt can afford: nor do I expect to find any path so desolate and barren, but what this privilege will enliven and embellish.

CONSIDERING myself as always in your presence, holding converse on the occurrences of the day, I shall be inspired with closer observation, and more steady attention to all the subjects of enquiry enjoined me; by which I shall endeavour to evince how sincerely I am

Your's.

DUFF HOUSE.

LETTER II.

Banff, May 17th.

PERMIT me, before I set out on this ramble, to present you with a view of *Duff House*, the seat of the earl of *Fife*. It certainly has much grandeur in it, and is a piece of very fine architecture; but the general effect will be much more magnificent and pleasant, when the colonnades and wings are added. A complete plan of the whole may be seen in *Wolf's Vitruvius*, according to the original design of the late celebrated Mr. *Adams*.

THE inclosed drawing will serve to give an idea of the building in its present state; but it is hardly possible, on so small a scale, to express the sumptuous style of the various enrichments.

FLUTED columns of the *Corinthian* and composite orders, support cornices that are adorned with the most elaborate and beautiful carvings, and embellished above by statues and vases highly ornamented. These on a near view give peculiar elegance to the edifice. The excellence of the workmanship becomes the more conspicuous, the more attentively it is surveyed; and the eminent hands employed, contributed not a little to the expence of forty thousand pounds, which *Duff House* has already cost.

SINCE you were in this corner, a very large and elegant apartment is opened for a library; a well-proportioned room, of betwixt sixty and seventy feet in length. It is already stored with some thousands of choice volumes; amongst these are vast collections

DUFF HOUSE.

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tions of portraits of eminent persons, which prove a suitable accompaniment to a cabinet containing an extensive collection of *Roman* and *British* coins, medals, &c.

THE library extending through the whole breadth of the building, commands from the windows of the one end, a charming prospect of the ocean, sea-coast, town of *Banff*, and new bridge of seven arches thrown over the *Devron*; from the other, a fine extensive view into the country, and of the pleasure-grounds along the banks of the river.

It may not be improper to mention, that on a rising ground on the west side of the river, a large and massy urn, containing bones dug up on the spot, with singular propriety distinguishes the consecrated ground, where formerly were a chapel and burying-place belonging to a monastery of *Carmelite* friars. The cells and other buildings belonging to a convent of that order, dedicated to the *Virgin Mary*, enclosed a delicious spot of garden-ground, which now forms an excellent orchard.

Not far from the urn, there is a considerable mount, of a circular form, which has much the appearance of having been artificially raised, and is said to be the effect of penances. It was formerly called *Colenard* (*Collus Leonardi*) from a superior of the convent, who thence delighted to contemplate the surrounding landscape.

On a hill opposite, are several large stone pillars, tending to form a semi-circle, and are doubtless the remains of a *Druid* temple. The adjacent part of the river is for some hundred yards separated into two branches, by an island covered with tall trees; in the middle there is an ornamental summer-house,

KIPPER SALMON.

shaded with their boughs, which makes a most agreeable retirement.

A MILE or two up the river, the banks of the *Devron* become lofty, precipitous, and rocky. The hills cloathed with wood, project their very craggy brows perpendicular into the channel. Several paths are effected along the cliffs, amidst the overhanging trees, which yield from their several windings variety of romantic scenery. These walks terminate at the rocks of *Ava*, immense picturesque precipices, that confine the river into a very narrow channel; betwixt these is thrown a very lofty and majestic arch, which has a peculiar good effect in so wild a situation.

I HERE beg leave to introduce a memoir, relative to an insect attendant on the salmon which come up this river, communicated to me by an ingenious friend.

“ THE foul salmon, of which a drawing has been already sent
 “ to Mr. *Pennant*, was caught *February* the 10th, 1776. When
 “ brought into the house, the colours upon this fish were remark-
 “ ably lively. The general appearance was that of a reddish
 “ brown; but the spots of red and black upon particular parts,
 “ were exceedingly bright and beautiful. When one compared
 “ the whole appearance to that of a clean fish, it was wretched
 “ and disagreeable: it was lank; the belly empty, flabby, and
 “ of a dirty yellow; the jaws at a considerable distance in the
 “ middle; the under jaw with a large protuberance standing per-
 “ pendicular upon the extremity; the upper jaw with a hole almost
 “ quite through (and I am told in some quite through) in which,
 “ when the jaws were shut, the protuberance lodged. Not one
 “ fin entire; the scales and skin being in many places destroyed,
 “ presented

LERNÆA SALMONEA.

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“ presented the appearance of foul ulcers. The gills were full
 “ of the *Lernæa salmoneæ*. Such salmon are called *Kipper*, or foul
 “ fish.

“ The cruves in the river *Devron* are (following the windings
 “ of the river) about a mile and a half from the sea. In the
 “ sandy places below the cruves, where there is a sufficient depth
 “ of water, a great many salmon spawn. In those places they
 “ are seen raising considerable hills of sand, probably to cover
 “ and protect the spawn*. They are likewise seen frequently
 “ pushing and striking one another; and the fishermen assert that
 “ they have many battles: their conjecture is, that the battles
 “ are occasioned by the males endeavouring to get at the spawn
 “ in order to devour it, and the females endeavouring to defend
 “ it. About these hills they remain during the winter, and until
 “ the young fry appear, unless forced off by a torrent; probably
 “ in order to keep the hills in repair, and to defend the spawn
 “ from the many enemies ready to attack it.—*Quære*, Are not
 “ the form of the jaws, the foul ulcers in the skin, and the de-
 “ struction of the fins, owing to the above-mentioned operations?
 “ *Quære*, If salmon spawned in the sea, would they not be found
 “ more or less in the condition of kipper? But in this condi-
 “ tion they are never found out of the rivers.”

“ LINNÆUS says of the *LERNÆA Salmonea*, *Habitat in branchiis*
 “ *Salmonum; ergo etiam marina*: this latter is certainly a mistake;
 “ for these *Lernææ* are never found with us out of the rivers; and
 “ several sensible fishermen have assured me, that salt water proves
 “ absolute destruction to these animals.

* *Br. Zool.* III. 4to. ed. p. 252.

“ SALMON,

" SALMON at a certain time during their stay in the sea, are
 " infested by another animal of that genus, called by *Linnaeus*
 " MONOCULUS, which is as really a marine, as the other is a fresh-
 " water animal. This species * seems to me to be undescribed
 " by authors, and very distinct from the *M. piscinus* of *Linnaeus*,
 " which it in some measure resembles. In a few hours after a
 " salmon has entered the river, not one of these MONOCULI are
 " to be found upon it. *Quære*, Have we not in these *vermes* a
 " provision made by the Author of nature, for forcing the salmon
 " from the sea into our rivers; and from the rivers back again
 " into the sea?

* See plate VI. fig. 1. Should this species be admitted new, it may not im-
 properly be called *MONOCULUS macrourus*. The figure 2. is *LERNÆA Sal-*
monea; each above thrice the size of life.

HUNTLY CASTLE.

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L E T T E R I I I .

Hamlet, near Kildrummy, May 20th.

AS you mentioned that a drawing of *Kildrummy-castle*, would be particularly acceptable; it became a principal object of my care: and the other morning, when I set out from *Banff*, I fixed on this as my first field of enterprize.

THE road through *Strath-ava*, along the banks of the *Deuron*, is extremely pleasant. It runs through fields in a high state of cultivation; the prospect all the way enriched with seats amidst extensive plantings. That luxuriancy of country is but little diminished when one advances into *Strath-bogie*. In that long and winding valley, *Huntly* claims chief notice. It is a large and flourishing village. The banks of the *Bogie*, on which it stands, are enlivened by a linen manufacture, which creates an agreeable stir about the place, and tends to encrease the number and opulence of the inhabitants.

NEAR the town are the ruins of *Huntly* castle. On the avenue that leads to it, are two large square towers, which had defended the gateway. Great part of the castle seems to be very old, and is nearly demolished; but there is a massy building of a more modern date, in which some of the apartments, and in particular their curious ceilings, are still preserved pretty entire. They are painted with a great variety of subjects, in small divisions: a few lines of poetry underneath each, describe the subject of the piece. In these, the virtues, vices, trades, and pur-

C

suits

HILL OF NOTH.

At the distance of many miles, one can distinguish those ridges, suits of thank-kind, are characterized by emblematical figures, which though not the most elegant, are expressive. In the chamber, which was appointed for a chapel, or place of worship, the parables and other sacred subjects are represented in the same style. The whole opens to one a field of various reflection and entertainment, well enough adapted to amuse a leisure hour.

A few miles distant from *Hunth*, in a narrow part of the strath, there is an old building, called *Gartly* castle, placed on a small mount, and surrounded with a deep ditch. It is a square tower; one end of it is fallen down, and shows a section of strong vaulted rooms; but there seemed nothing so singular in its structure, as to merit more particular attention.

Some aged trees decaying around those walls, which they had sheltered, now render it a romantic object in the landscape; it was in former years a respectable fortress. The *Marshall* family built it, to awe the clans in these parts; it was of force three or four hundred years ago.

HILL OF NOTH. The *Hill of Noth*, a most majestic mountain, bounds the strath on the opposite side. In general it is brown with moss and heath, interspersed with the bare rock, in many places crumbling down. The highest part of it is a circular hill, whose verdure, as well as height, distinguishes it from the rest of the mountain. This is called the *Top of Noth*; and bears the strongest resemblance to every description of a volcanic mount.*

* *Tour in Scotl.* 1772. II. 165. The last edition is what I refer to throughout this book.

EVIDENCES OF A VOLCANO.

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At the distance of many miles, one can distinguish those ridges, which are the boundaries of the *crater*, indicating the hollow in the top. I did not go up the mountain; but have with me an account of it, written by a gentleman who examined it with particular care. I shall give you the narrative in his own words.

" I had seen, some years ago, pieces of vitrified, or calcined stone brought from that place. The gentleman who had them in his possession said, that some imputed these calcinations to a *volcano*. However, I did not hesitate to pronounce them stones calcined by the burning down of a castle, as I had found something very like them on the castle-hill of *Gullan*, in parts where the sward of grass was broken.

" WHEN I reached the top of the hill of *North*, and saw the calcinations, I found reason to alter my opinion. On the top of the hill there is an oblong hollow, as I could guess, of about an *English* acre, covered with a fine sward of grass: in the middle, toward the east end of this hollow, is a large and deep well. The hollow is surrounded on all sides with a thick rampart of stones. On three sides, this rampart, from eight to twelve feet thick, is one compact body of stones and minerals, which have been in a state of fusion, resembling a mixture of stone and iron ore, all vitrified, calcined, and incorporated. On the north side, the rampart consists of broken pieces of rock, which have the appearance of having been torn to pieces by some extraordinary violence. If the calcined compact wall exists under them, it is not at present visible; and I had not leisure nor opportunity more particu-

A VOLCANO.

HTOM 10 111

" larly to examine. A person whom I conversed with the next
 " day, who had been also on the spot, supposed the wall to have
 " been the work of art; constructed for a retreat to the neigh-
 " bouring families and their cattle, in times of public danger;
 " and that the calcinations had been occasioned by the fires kept
 " by the people at those seasons. But I have no idea that a wall
 " of such thickness could have been so thoroughly vitrified and
 " calcined by any artificial or incidental fires.
 " That men hardly beset, might climb up with some provi-
 " sions to it, as a place of refuge, is probable: but that on a bar-
 " ren mountain-top, far from cultivated ground, half a day's
 " journey from the plain, that there, in any period of society, men
 " should have been tempted to build that amazing rampart, is
 " not to be imagined: they have found it a natural and extensive
 " fortress, and in critical circumstances have made use of it ac-
 " cordingly. That it has been occupied as a place of strength
 " and of refuge is very evident—for, some hundred yards down
 " lower on the hill, there are the remains of another rampart or
 " wall, consisting of loose stones piled together without any ce-
 " ment, carried quite round the hill. This last has been built
 " for an additional defence to those who made their abode on
 " the top.
 " I avoid an enumeration of these species of fortifications, be-
 " cause Mr. PENNANT has already taken such notice of them
 " as to render unnecessary every thing which I or any one else
 " could say on the subject *.

* Tour in Scotl. 1772, Part I. 211, 389, and Part II. 157. And Tour
 in Wales, 412.

" The top of *North* for two thirds downwards, is covered
 " with a green sward; below that it is brown with heath; this
 " is the very reverse of the adjacent mountains; and the greater
 " verdure of the upper part, I impute to a new soil created by
 " the ashes of the volcano. The opening called *as well*, is sup-
 " posed to have been the latest crater. About a mile south, down
 " towards the lower grounds of the *Cabroch*, there is a very
 " pretty regular green hill, which I ascribe to a later eruption
 " than those which may have formed the contiguous hills, now
 " covered with heath. There is, an extraordinary luxuriant
 " spring of water rushes out at once from the side of the hill
 " of *North*, which is likewise some confirmation of the opinion,
 " that a volcano has some time existed there, which has occa-
 " sioned great hollows and reservoirs of water, in the heart of
 " the mountain. And the wild irregularities of nature through all the *Cabroch*,
 " the hideous and strange projection of rocks from the sides of
 " the hills, would seem to indicate some vast convulsions, which
 " the earth must have suffered in those parts."

The traces of ancient volcanos are far from being unfrequent
 in Scotland. The hill of *Finehaven* is one instance; and not
 only abundant in this species of *lava*, but with tarras, or the *pulvis*
puteolani, an *amalgama*, as *Condamine*† calls it, of calcined
 stones mixed with scorias and iron-rust reduced to powder. The
 hill of *Beregonium*, near *Dunstaffnage* castle, is another, yielding
 vast quantities of pumices or *scoria* of different kinds; many of

* Tour in Scotl. 1772, Part II. 165.

† Tour in Italy, 139.

which

APPROACH TO KILDRUMY.

which are of the same species with those of the volcanic *Iceland* *. The noble assemblage of basaltic columns at *Staffa*, those in the isle of *Skie*, and the rock *Humbra*, are but so many evidences of the ancient volcanos of this country †. And finally, the immense stratum of *pumex vitreus*, or *Iceland agate*, on the hill of *Dun-fuin* in *Arran* ‡, is the last proof I shall bring in support of the question.

From the foot of *Noth*, is a pleasant ride along the banks of the *Bogie*. That fertile strath, in former ages, sent forth many a warrior to battle: *Strath-bogie* alertness, strength, and activity, were particularly distinguished.

On the right, in the face of a hill, within a few miles of *Kildrummy*, there is a fine quarry of free-stone, and one of a hard concrete substance, used principally for mill-stones: some of these, rolled from the quarry at the top of the hill, have come down with such rapidity, that, scouring along the plain ground at the foot of the hill, they had sprung from a neighbouring precipice, over the *Bogie water*, and were lying scattered on the opposite side.

The hills now put on a more bleak and desolate look: the way over barren heaths began to seem tedious; when *Kildrummy* castle came in view. Even the distant appearance of that noble ruin, dissipated all ideas of fatigue. On going towards it, across a stony moor, passed by a well-shaped, though rude stone obelisk, ten or eleven feet high; and was directed to some un-

* Tour in Scotl. Part I. 412.

† The same, 299, 306.

‡ The same, 211.

SUBTERRANEAN RECESSES.

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derground vaults, which have their openings in the side of a mossy bank. The best entrance into them was but small, and shewed a long dark cavity within. The access was confined and difficult; but on going in I found the recess to be about eight feet wide, and six or seven feet high, well built up at the sides, and covered with vast flaggs.

ARTIFICIAL
CAVES.

One may advance twelve or fifteen paces without interruption, and where the passage is blocked up, seems to be owing rather to rubbish having fallen in, than to the design of the builders. The others are similar; but whether they have been connected together, and had communication at the ends, cannot now be easily discovered. They are said to have been numerous and of great extent. They were the retreats of the antient possessors; such as *Tacitus* informs us were used by the *Germans* as a shelter, as well from the inclemency of the weather, as from the fury of their enemies*. Those who used these concealments would, no doubt, have it in their power to block up the entrance with a large stone, so as to have the appearance of its naturally lying there; and the banks in which they are, give no other evidence of their contents. They would therefore answer well for the purposes of stratagem and retreat.

On a nearer approach, the appearance of *Kildrumy* becomes still more striking and majestic. The style of the whole building is truly great, equally expressive of magnificence and a regard to security. Its strength seems superior to what could have been thought necessary before the use of cannon; and its

KILDRUMY
CASTLE.

* De Mor. Germ. c. 16.

KILDRUMY CASTLE.

grandeur corresponds with the idea of its having been intended for a royal palace.

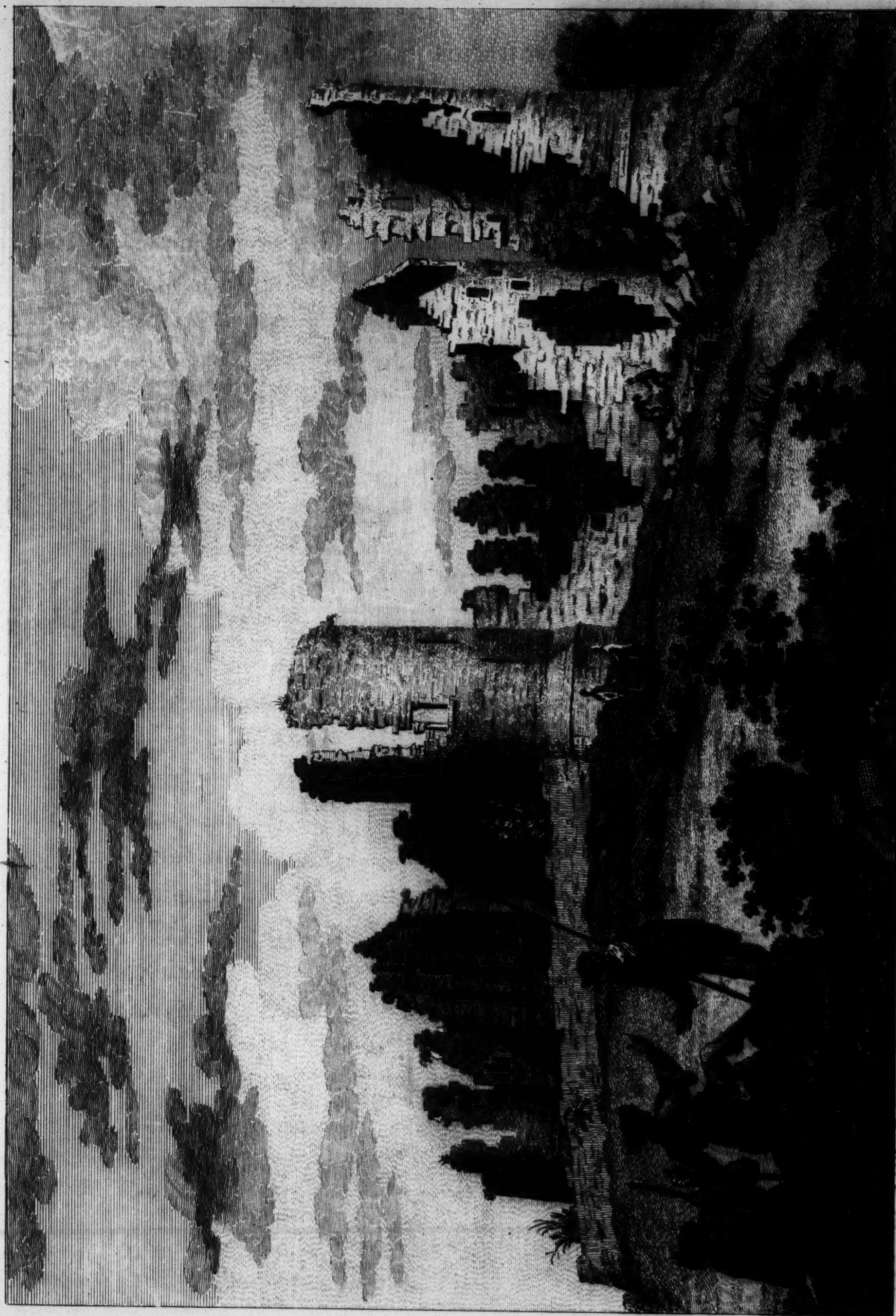
PLACED on an eminence projecting into a deep glen, the buildings occupy the level top of the rising ground, and, arranged in form of a pentagon, are defended at the angles by very strong and lofty towers: one of these, called the *Snow Tower*, is still near fifty yards in height. The court within is spacious, and is about the size of an acre. A peculiar kind of columns, and vast length of windows, indicate where the place of worship has been; but the enrichments, and even the form of it, are mostly lost, and make, with the rest of the pile, one common ruin.

ALL the vaults in one of the towers, are left open in the middle; through these passed a maffy chain, suspended at the top, and reaching down to the ground, for the more commodiously raising water for the use of the upper apartments. Some old men, who remember when the chain was taken away, say, that there was a deep well underneath.

AN underground passage, from within the fort, down to the rivulet which runs in the bottom of the glen, is still observable.

ON looking into it, where the bank is broken up, it had much the appearance of those recesses in the heath, which I mentioned my having entered; but this seemed now altogether inaccessible. It is said to have been of height sufficient to allow both men and horses to go down to the stream: such a communication with the water must have been of much consequence during a siege.

MANY



C. Corbier del.

E. Mallet sc.

KILDRUMY CASTLE.

1. The first of these is the fact that the system is not a simple one, but a complex one, involving many different factors, and the results of which are not always predictable.

[illegible]

When the first of the boats were loaded at Whiter, the
the east of London, and the ship returned north with the
maintained on his way, the same day returned, crowded to the
standing for protest as from the agent, and for the sake of cost
advantage, offered to parties to his figures and danger, and
to follow it, for some however leave. But he remained there
about to conflict then and later, by a time in his side
of the way, which he intended to do, respectively, and
a part of the day in the morning. In 1900, the same was ex-
posed, the wife and daughter escaped through the forest,
through the hall, and then to the stairs of St. James at
York, and the one of the regarded as a lady of
the place, and a lady, and a lady, and a lady, and a lady,
was then that ordered by the one of the lady, and the
the lady, and the lady, and the lady, and the lady, and the lady,
the lady, and the lady, and the lady, and the lady, and the lady,

MANY instances occur, which show the former importance of *Kildrumy* castle, to be justly remarkable in the annals of *Scotland*.

OWING to its peculiar strength and situation, it often became a fortunate asylum to many noble families, who otherwise, too often shared with their lords the horrors of civil war.

WHEN the forces of king *Robert* were routed at *Methuen*, by the earl of *Pembroke*, and the king retreated north with the remainder of his army, the ladies, his relations, crowded to his standard for protection from the enemy; and for the sake of that advantage, offered to partake of his fatigues and dangers, and to follow his fortunes however severe. But he enjoined them rather to consult their ease and safety, by retiring to his castle of *Kildrumy*, which he continued to esteem impregnable, and a place of thorough security. In 1306, when a siege was expected, his wife and daughter escaped through the subterraneous passage, and fled to the sanctuary of *St. Duthac* at *Taine*; but the earl of *Ross*, regardless of the sanctity of the place, seized and delivered them up to the *English* *. It was soon after besieged by the earls of *Lancaster* and *Hereford*. One *Osburn* treacherously burnt the magazines; which deprived the garrison of provisions, and obliged it to surrender at discretion †.

WHEN *Edward III.* wished to have the kingdom of *Scotland* annexed to his crown, and for that purpose invaded it, the adherents of *Robert Bruce* defended this fortress against the enemy,

* *Annals of Scotl.* II. 9.

† The same, 13.

SIEGE OF KILDRUMY CASTLE.

during their most successful inroads, and from thence considerably harraßed them.

IN 1333, *Kildrumy* was one of the few castles which were possessed by the friends of *Scotland*. It was then held by the venerable *Christiana Bruce*, sister of *Robert I.* and mother of the late owner *Donald Marre*, earl of *Marre*, slain the year before at the battle of *Dupplin* *: nor could the *English* from that time wrest it out of the hands of the *Scottish* loyalists.

SIEGE IN 1335.

The earl of *Atbol* courted the favour of *Edward*; and desirous of doing him some distinguished service, in promoting the design of conquering *Scotland*, thought no enterprize better adapted to express his zeal, than that of seizing on the castle of *Kildrumy*. He invested it in *November* 1335, with three thousand men; but on the appearance of a small army of those who maintained the spirit of independence, *Atbol* raised the siege, that he might disperse them: on this the garrison sallied out on his rear, and he was cut off, with most of his followers. From his defeat and death in the field of *Kilblain*, the spirit of liberty reanimated *Scotland*. And *Edward* secretly sighed for an honourable opportunity of making peace with a nation, which he found, neither his power nor his policy could subdue.

It continued after this the seat of the family of *Marre*. In 1360, on a quarrel between *David II.* and *Thomas* the then earl, it was besieged and taken by the king, who placed a garrison in it; and *Marre* obtained leave to quit the kingdom; but soon regained the royal favor †.

* *Annals of Scotl.* II. 168.

† The same, 249.

ITS RUINOUS STATE.

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THE recollection of that sad variety of fate which its possessors had often experienced, made the survey of that grand and noble ruin much more solemn and interesting.

THIS place fell by marriage * to the noble family of the *Erskines*, afterwards created earls of *Marre*. It continued to be their principal habitation till the beginning of the present century. A lady in the neighbourhood remembers them, and has been at their table in the castle. But that earldom being forfeited in the year fifteen, *Kildrummy* was deserted; and from that time went to ruin.

THE earl of *Fife* has been at much pains to preserve a chamber in the *Snow Tower*, where his agents might transact business with his tenants in these parts. But the irresistible hand of time, and the still increasing weight of incumbent ruins, render every effort abortive, to preserve any part of it entire.

PERHAPS the inclosed drawing will more fully express the present state, and general style of the building, than any farther description of it which I could offer.

* *Crawford's Recreago*, 295, 302.

ROAD FROM KILDRUMY.

LETTER IV.

Mar-Lodge, May 23.

VERY desirous of viewing "the exceedingly romantic
 "rocks of *Brae-mar* *," which you so much admired and
 had celebrated, I advanced among the mountains. The way into
 the country beyond *Kildrumy* lies through a narrow defile. The
 road, winding amidst the rugged precipices of dark and forlorn
 hills, seems gloomy and forbidding : but after a few miles, the
 prospect opens into a large extent of well-cultivated fields,
 spreading round the kirk-town and castle of *Towie*; and from
 thence there is a delightful ride along the banks of the *Don*.
 The road following the windings of the river, continues good
 for twelve or fifteen miles ; and at every turn presents fresh views
 of arable lands belonging to seats, seen amidst wood in the
 openings of the glens : and old castles appearing on the higher
 grounds, frequently gave dignity to the landscape.

ON quitting the river, the road becomes broken and craggy,
 and leads up among hills, the most wild and desolate imagin-
 able : some of them singularly picturesque, composed of rocks
 of various forms, almost completely bare ; others distinguish-
 able in nothing but their bleak brows, and melancholy shades ;
 which overshadow the few spots of verdure to be found in the
 vales. Saw on one eminence a massy tomb, raised by the pride
 of a chieftain, who would not sleep with the vulgar ; nor let it

* Tour 1769, 123.

be in the power of his vassals to put a foot on the earth that covered him.

ON ascending a high and steep hill, and gaining its summit, beheld one of those astonishing *Alpine* scenes, whose greatness so wonderfully fills the mind. The prospect immediately below was a wide-extended, deep, and dreary valley, a desert moor, spread with dark brown heath, where verdure seemed to be denied; and beyond, a range of mountains the most magnificent imaginable: these enormous piles seemed crowded to the sky: the clouds that broke upon their tops, and floated down the intermediate spaces, gave striking evidence of their immense magnitude and various distance: their shades mingling with the shadows of the clouds that hovered round them, made the vast cliffs towering above, look over the lower regions of the air in the most august and gigantic forms. These constitute part of the hilly region of *Brae-mar*.

AFTER descending by a rough path of some miles into the bottom of the valley, it was with much pleasure I found the way lead to the banks of the *Dee*. The pleasing scenes of that sweet tract have been long celebrated in rural song. They are indeed extravagantly wild and charming. Here a luxuriant field of waving green, the husbandman's hope and joy: there the mountain's hoary brow overhanging the dale, shagged with parched timber, the remains of conflagrations in the forest. On one hand, a hamlet amidst blossoming trees; the chearful cottagers attending their flocks and herds: on the other, towering cliffs, whose projecting rocks and lofty pines vie which shall claim most admiration. The river now seen in an opening,
gently

CASTLE OF BRAE-MAR.

gently gliding by rows of willows, softens the scene, and reflects the majestic landscape: next minute presents itself an impetuous torrent, dashing in noise and foam down its precipitous and rocky channel.

THESE noble and chearful prospects, in alternate succession, yield equal entertainment all the way to *Mar-forest*. The contrast is beautifully striking and complete, where "the immense "rugged, and broken cliffs, adorned with birch and pine, front, "the fields and gardens about *Invercauld* *."

A LITTLE way above the castle of *Brae-mar*, there is a square tower upon the top of a rock; the rock on three sides is washed by the cascades of a rivulet, which falls into the *Dee*. The building is greatly demolished; but is said to have been a fortress and hunting-seat, at times the residence of the kings of *Scotland*.

OVER the rivulet there is a good stone bridge of one arch, having a machine placed on the side, for breaking the ice in winter, that the people may be the more readily supplied with water.

A FEW miles from thence to the right, there is a long, romantic, winding valley, called *Glen-quioch*, bounded by sloping mountains, whose declivities were formerly covered with wood; but in 1695, a saw-mill was built at the mouth of the glen; and the timber yearly after, was cut down and sold, to a great amount: one only now observes, amid the highest cliffs, those detached trees the workmen could not reach.

* Tour 1769, 127.

GLEN-QUOICH. DALE-MORE.

23

THE rest of the glen has much the appearance of incorrigible sterility: yet on more attentive observation, thousands of young pines are seen forcing their way through the chinks of the rocks, and rising amid layers of loose stones and gravel, where one would be apt to imagine, vegetation would be denied. The stream that runs through the glen has washed the soil from among the shelvy rocks which constitute its channel, and sometimes found a passage under them: here and there the shelves, either originally by nature or by the whirl of the current, are perforated through, and down beneath these circular openings, the limpid stream shews a pebbly bottom.

Now and then the opposite hills become precipitous, and approach each other very near. The rivulet, in deep cascades, falls down between the overhanging rocks; and the crags, shagged with bushes, and venerable with the remains of decayed trees, exhibit some excellent specimens of romantic landscape, and great variety of uncommon prospects.

Four or five miles above *Brac-mar* castle, a gothic tower, on the top of a picturesque rock, called *Craggan*, points out the access into *Dale-more*, through ranges of stately trees, which skirt the banks of the *Dee*. From the adjacent hill, which commands the full prospect of that rich valley, the view is exceedingly sumptuous and delightful. A large and spacious plain, finely divided by the windings of the river; enriched with variety of wood; surrounded with enormous mountains, the loftiest pines waving among their craggy cliffs—presents the most singular combination of every rural beauty, with the most magnificent scenery that nature can exhibit.

THE river, flowing on in an easy serpentine course, here and there reflecting the pure azure of the sky, enlivens the deep shade of the over-hanging wood, which finely marks its progress through the plain. The water spreading near the gothic tower, forms several little islands tufted with trees, which give a fresh variety to the scene. The inclosures of the dale, marked by various rows of trees; and ornamental clumps of planting, rising near the house and gardens; give the whole valley a charming and very splendid appearance. On rugged parts of the hills, a tower, a high obelisk, an hermitage, a pyramidal seat, distinguish several eminences, and shew works of taste, mingling with the wilder beauties of uncultivated nature. Distant farms, prettily divided by hedges, embellish the skirts of the mountains, and form a charming contrast with the dark pines above: the brown heath of the summits, the purple bloom of the flower, and grey rocks appearing through; give another picturesque effect to the landscape, and set off the fainter tints of the blue misty mountains which terminate the scene. In such a beautiful field, and in such a magnificent inclosure, is situated *Mar-lodge*, a hunting-seat of the earl of *Fife*. It is in the heart of *Mar-forest*; an extent of country of about fifteen miles square, reserved entirely for deer and game, of which it yields the greatest plenty and variety. The deer being never disturbed near the seat, come about it in great numbers, without shewing any marks of fear: advancing from the thickets, they often cross the green, and stop to feed, on the way to their native mountains. The young fawns bounding from the copse, and accompanied by the hinds, deliberately walk along in view. They are often observed on the adjacent heights,
resting

resting in the heat of the day: and in the evenings march along the sides of the dale in companies of twenty or thirty together; the stags with their branchy horns, and fine shapes, are beautiful and entertaining figures in the landscape.

THE deer that are used at table, are killed in distant parts of the forest, many miles from *Mar-lodge*. These hills abound with partridge, black cock, ptarmigans, and dottrels; and are a rich field of amusement for the sportsman; though the ruggedness of the grounds makes the recreation to be accompanied with no small fatigue.

THIS forest, as you observe, was the scene of the vast huntings of the noble owners the earls of *Mar*. To the droll quotation which you make from the *water poet* *, I beg to add, that they passed the whole month of *August*, and part of that of *September*, in the chase, and every one was dressed in an uniform livery.

THE *lin of Dee*, is an object which generally claims the first attention of those who visit *Mar-forest*. On the way to it, through shadowy walks, along the side of the river, a saw-mill breaks into the uniformity of the grove, seen in the opening of a pleasant lawn; the workmen busy among piles of wood; the river spreading beneath, and broken in its fall over shelvy rocks, which often detain the timber floated down to the mill: these objects are an agreeable variety to the general prospect of the forest, and give a more chearful entrance into the dark thicket beyond.

ABOUT three miles above *Mar-lodge*, from a rocky glade, one

* *John Taylor*. See *Tour in Scotl.* 1769. 124.

hears the sound of the *lin*. It is a noble fall of the river : but the precipices which there confine the *Dee*, approach so near each other, that the cataract is scarcely observable, until within reach of the spray, which the fall occasions : but under the shade, and at the foot of a lofty pine, where a rustic seat is placed for contemplation ; the prospect—of aged trees which hang drooping over the torrent tumbling into the depth below ; the loud and continual murmur of the water, echoing in the hollow of the worn rocks ; the rugged cliffs above, cloathed with gloomy groves of pine ; all command a serious attention, and render the scene interesting and solemn. Vast logs of wood, seen amidst the foam of the cascade, are drove with violence against the rocks, and, precipitated from such a height, sound in their fall like peals of distant thunder ; and make the solitude inspire additional awe.

A MILE or two farther up *Glen Dee*, a singular craggy hill attracts one's notice ; it is called *Craig-Phatric*, and is composed of broken rocks, which seem to be huge stones piled on one another, rather than any solid mass. Between two high and pointed cliffs, into which the front of the mount is divided, there appears beyond, as if within its summit, a prospect of precipices with vast trees raised from amid the naked rocks ; from among these a rivulet comes down, and rushing through the chasm, forms a white torrent playing from rock to rock all the way to the bottom of the hill. The rugged and deep-worn channel, grown dark with the slime of ages, is lighted by the dashing of the water, and the whiteness of the spray. At the foot of the fall, which plays down the steep for fifty or sixty yards, there
is

is a rural bridge, composed of broken trees and fods, which leads the way to some cottages that are sheltered by the rock. The peasants that inhabit them cultivate a meadowy plain, which stretches thence to the *Dee*: these dwellings, from their very artless form, and wicker enclosures, scarcely seem to diminish the wildness, but add to the beauty of the landscape.

FARTHER into the forest, and near the source of the *Dee*, are many noble glens: deep romantic solitudes, encompassed with horrid precipices, and where rocky paths lead on the verge of impassable swamps. In one, a hideous cavern, awful as ever hermit retired to, yawns over the end of a dreary lake. It chills one's blood to enter it. Leaving *Lui beg*, an opener but rocky dale on the left, see a charming valley of meadow-ground, with much fine natural grass. The ruins of several stone buildings shew that it had been once inhabited: but it is now, as the other pastures of the forest, left to fatten the deer. On the sides of the hills bordering on the valley, are many thousand stumps of trees, the remains of woods which have been floated down *Lui water* to the *Dee*.

FROM thence, by a narrow path, winding among trees, there is an entrance into a dale called *Derry*, singularly wild and picturesque. In the mouth of it rises a mount, exactly according to the model of *Tomman-beurich*, only the form a little more varied, by the irregular size of the timber which covers it. Within the mount the inclosure of the dale is complete. Ridges of rocky mountains run along its sides, and these, connected at the further end, form a magnificent boundary to some miles of pretty level ground. The sloping sides of the dale, have a pe-

culiar wildness in their appearance, owing to the forest in these parts having in a former age been set on fire : many of the stately trees still retaining their bare, white, parched branches, twisted in an innumerable variety of the strangest forms, and contrasted with the heath, are striking objects in that piece of desolate scenery. Numbers of small torrents rushing down the rocks, some of them precipitated over the cliffs from a vast height, are united at the bottom of the dale in one common stream, and forming a considerable body of water, run in serpentine windings, under the shade of those trees which the conflagration had spared. This ramble has yielded a number of sketches, which will require leisure to fill up ; and drawings of them shall be at your command. In the mean time, you will receive along with this, a view of *Mar-lodge*, and the adjacent grounds, with a prospect of the neighbouring mountain*.

WHEN travelling through the forest, one can scarce help being struck with the amazing size, and venerable appearance of the more antient trees. Some of them standing in a kind of solitary majesty, on the higher grounds, at a distance from the woods : others, which through age and infirmity, have yielded to the winter storm and the ravages of time, are laid along the ground a length of seventy feet, and have torn up with their enormous roots, such piles of earth, as look at a distance like ruins, and give the forest a most august and forlorn appearance. Much fine timber is perishing there : some thirteen feet in girth : fallen among rocks and broken grounds, where no carriage can

* Published in the *Virtuoso's Museum*.

be drawn, no art can bring them to the river, but at an expence far exceeding their value: they therefore are left to unnoticed decay. Others, which have still withstood the storms, have begun to moulder in the trunks, and are opened. The foresters, by fire and other artifices, have enlarged the excavations, and formed such cavities in them, as to yield a shelter from the winds and rains, and are used as temporary cots. The trees do not seem at all injured by being hollowed, but spread their branches fresh above, as if no such excavation had been made.

I LONG admired one very noble pine with various tops; it exhibited an uncommon appearance. The branches of prodigious size, and most irregularly wreathed, seemed to bend under their weight of timber: one of them had reached the ground, taken root, and for many years drew nourishment from the new stock, which also reared an additional tree: but either through the encreasing strength and elasticity of the parent branch, or loosened by some violent agitation of the great stem of the tree, the large new roots have been torn from the soil, and now hang suspended a great way from the ground, with other branches darting from them.

PART of the woods in *Glen lui*, being fallen into decay, ranges of vast trunks of the trees, having long lain along the ground, are immured in moss: their perished leaves and dissolving branches, strewed round, constitute the present soil, and aiding to corrupt and soften the timber, are in a great measure turned into one general mass of vegetable earth. In some places, where water has stagnated among the fallen trees, the morass is complete and inaccessible; in others, the trunks are so compact and firm

PICTURESQUE SCENERY.

as to yield a safe and dry path, only now and then the specious heath gives way between the logs. Of some trees one end may be dug into peats, the other sawed off and used as good timber.

SOME very aged, hollow, perforated trunks; which have not been torn up from the roots, but whose stems and branches are buried round them; still projecting from the soil, and gradually decaying in all the original wildness of nature, have something extremely venerable and picturesque about them. The dark brown furze and grey heath, sprinkled with leaves of bright green; and decked with the variously-coloured and showy berries of the small shrubs, which already find their soil on the withering timber, make a contrast, like the hoary greatness of declining years, with the sprightly fallies of aspiring youth, not to be passed by unadmired: with these decaying nature is springing forth in other forms; every trunk is enriched with blossoms not its own.

MANY of the rocks are covered with a substance, which is picked off for an ingredient in a crimson or purple dye.

MUCH amused with the scenery of the forest, I must have tired your patience by attempting the description; but trust, that the wild features of nature have made such lasting impressions on my mind, as shall enable me to express them more fully by my pencil.

LETTER

LETTER V.

Bana, May 25th.

I WAS up this morning at the top of a neighbouring hill, where are the vestiges of some strong entrenchments, that had been occupied by the *Cummins* in the fourteenth century, when they had much of their fortunes and honours at stake. King *Robert Bruce* had been defeated, and driven to the hills for refuge: he remained there a considerable time recruiting his forces, and was again come down to overthrow his opponents, and recover the sovereignty of *Scotland*. The *Cummins*, determined to make a stand, chose this hill as a place of great strength, and occupied the entrenchments with considerable force. The king encamped hard by, in a field still called *Bruce's park*; it is covered with wood, and in a thicket are still to be seen a circular trench and rampart; the *prætorium* where the royal tent was pitched. The day of battle proved decisive in favour of *Robert*, and began that course of victories, whereby he secured a hereditary title to the crown of *Scotland* *.

IN coming down through these hilly regions, stopped the first night at *Pananack-lodge*; an extensive building, opposite to the strange rocks and pass of *Bollitir*. There, a mineral well and baths, whose virtues have been often experienced, are become much frequented by the infirm. The *lodge*, containing a number

* *Abercromby's Mart. Atch. Life of Robert Bruce.*

CASTLE OF DUNADEER.

of bedchambers, and a spacious public room, is fitted up for the accommodation of those who come to take the benefit of the waters. Goat-whey is also there obtained in the greatest perfection.

NEXT day came down to the castle of *Dunadeer*: from its eminent situation on the top of a high circular hill, it is observable at a great distance.

LESSLY, bishop of *Ross*, whose history of *Scotland* was printed at *Rome* in the fifteenth century, says that this hill was called *Dun d'ore*, the Golden Mountain, on account of its abounding with gold; that it was owing to this, that the teeth of the sheep which feed upon it, look as if overlaid with gold; and a large circle of stones on the hill, give a brazen sound*. And the common people have still a tradition current among them, that persons skilled in magic, by performing certain ceremonies at sun-rise, will see the shrubs assume the appearance of gold, on those parts of the hill that most abound with it. From whence these fables derived their origin must be uncertain: but as to the last, one could easily conceive, how the whole summit of the mount would have a golden hue, when receiving the warm glow of the morning, before the sun-beams reached the plain.

THE ruins of the castle are not great, considerable only on account of their antiquity; the fortress had consisted of a double court of buildings: some acres of ground round it are inclosed

* *Lefslæi, Hist. Scotiæ*, 29. The bishop observes, that tradition said, the great circle of stones had composed the temple of an idol:—it may be superfluous to remark, that more probably the stones were druidical, and the fable of the sound they gave, calculated to inspire votaries with greater awe.

by a very massy rampart, and wide trench without. It is asserted that it was a palace of *Gregory* the Great, and it is near nine hundred years since he died. The quiet and security to be enjoyed, on the so strongly fortified top of this sequestered mountain, were inducements which prevailed with *Gregory* to make choice of *Dunadeer* for his place of residence, towards the end of his days : and it is accordingly recorded, that he finished his virgin life at his castle there* : and was carried thence in pomp to *Jona*, to sleep on holy ground with the other monarchs who chose that sacred island for their tomb.

CIR. ANN. 892.

WERE these more antient castles well authenticated, they would, in some respects, come in the place of medals, and give additional validity to our histories. But I greatly suspect that the present ruins are only the reliques of a fortress long posterior to any which *Gregory* might have erected. It is possible that he might have founded here a retreat for his latter days. Whosoever will give themselves the trouble of comparing the style of architecture of this castle, with that of the abbey of *Deer* (which is well known to have been founded about the year 1218) will be satisfied that the architects of each were co-æval.

THE country on the way from *Dunadeer*, presented variety of well-cultivated lands ; but the intermediate hills very rugged and rocky. On several of the higher grounds, saw large stones set on end ; on one or two were some rude sculptures. The *Maiden* stone, on the hill of *Benachie*, mentioned by Mr. *Gordon*, is elaborately carved ; the ornaments elegantly raised ; but

* *Boet.* lib. x. p. 213.

though I examined the hieroglyphical figures on it with the utmost attention, can make nothing more of them than what is represented in the "*Itinerarium Septentrionale* *.

REMAINS of druidical circles, also, frequently attract one's attention on these hills, though the uniformity of their appearance, yields but small recompence for encountering the rough ways that lead to them. I will only add one remark, to the many you have made on the subject of these antient places of worship †; that the church of *Benackie* is included in one of them, which is not unfrequent in *Scotland*. This seems the effect of choice, not chance, and designed by the founders to tempt the Pagan inhabitants to attend on the doctrine of revelation, by building the churches on the spots, on which they were wont to celebrate their antient rites. The druidical temples were called in the *Erse Clachan*; whence to *go to clachan* is, among the highlanders, a common phrase for *going to church*, to this day ‡.

* *Boet. lib. xx. p. 162. tab. LIX.*

† *Tour in Scotl. Part I. 43, 205, 412.*

‡ *Tour in Scotl. 1769, 232.*





FRONT VIEW OF THE BULLERS OF BUCHAN .

L E T T E R VI.

Peterhead, May 28th.

FROM *Old-meldrum*, a pretty extensive village, situated on the post road from *Aberdeen* northwards, and where the country opens more into a plain, a ride of twenty miles to the coast, there is little characteristic in the face of the country. A mixture of hills, not lofty, brown with original moss, makes the verdure of the intervening vallies and cultivated ground appear to the greater advantage. In many places, however, near to old castles and gentlemen's seats, the scenery is both romantic and pleasant; the banks of the rivers, enriched with wood, precipitous and rocky.

I OPENED the prospect of the sea near to *Slains Castle*. Next morning rose with a mildness of aspect peculiarly inviting; and I embraced so favorable an opportunity of looking at these bold and magnificent shores from the sea. I rejoiced in the tranquillity of the ocean, that allowed me to take some sketches of these so grand and singular rocks. There cannot be a finer entertainment, than to sail among them in a calm day. I admired the lofty *Dunby*. Many other huge rocks rise from a vast depth of water, and often form labyrinths; in steering through which the prospect is ever beautifully varying.

THE view from the sea, of the *Bullers of Buchan*, is peculiarly striking; on approaching it, one is presented with two hideous cliffs; in sailing between which we fell under the shade of an

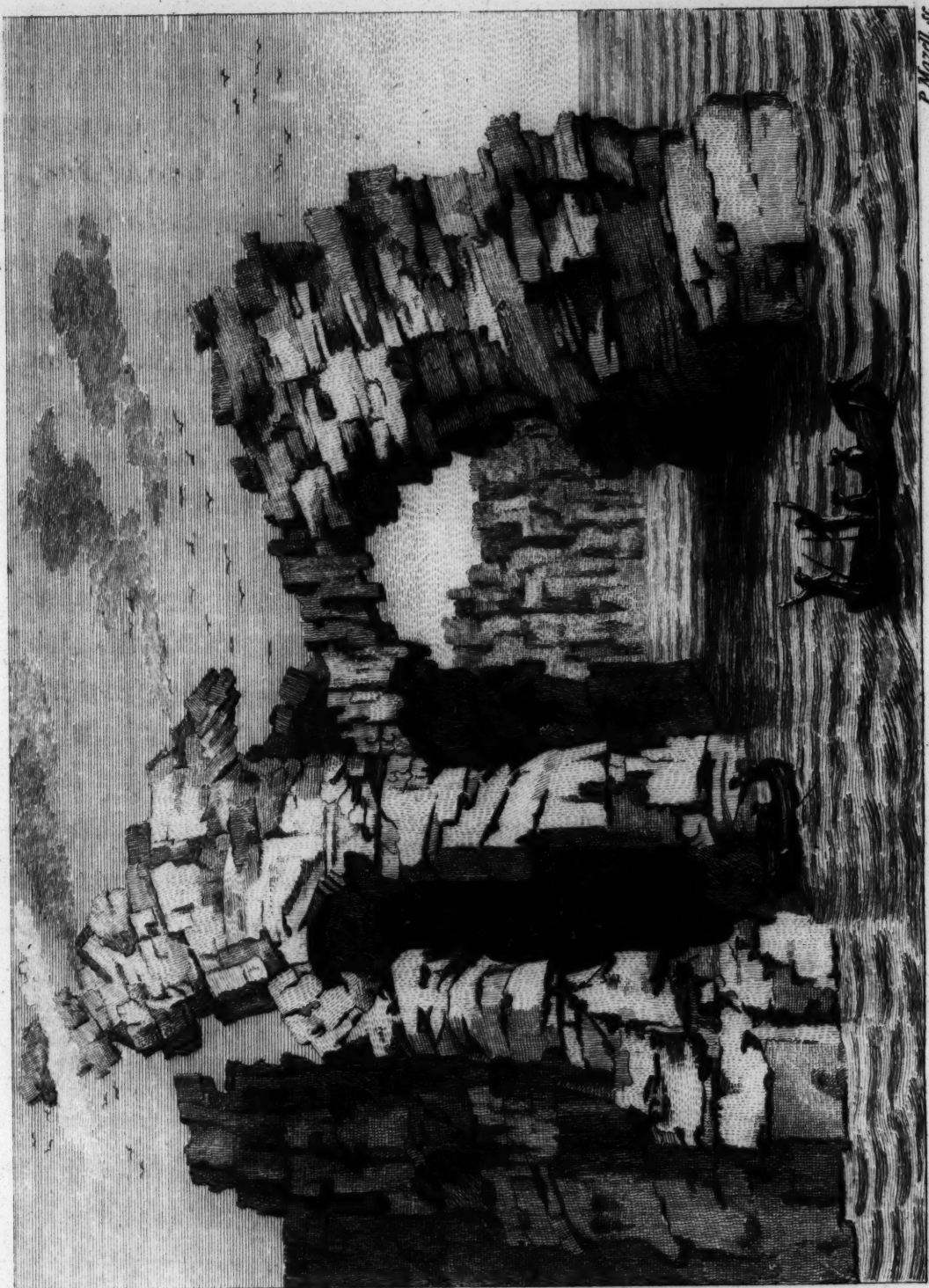
BULLERS OF BUCHAN.

immense and awful precipice, and entered the mouth of the cave. The vault in general, where most confined, is thirty or forty feet high; yet is so long, that the light considerably decreases, and the stillness of the waves, added to the evening-like shade, gave much solemnity to the subterraneous passage; but within, the amphitheatre of rock is most sumptuous and splendid, not to be beheld without admiration. One sees an open view of the clouds and heavens, above, surrounded with a spacious sweep of some hundreds of yards of inaccessible and often overhanging cliffs. On one hand is a deep and dismal cavern, in which the sea runs a great way: on the other, a beach of flat stones, under a lofty arch of the projecting rock, where it is usual for parties who come to view this singular retirement to land and regale.

For miles along the coast, the scenery of rocks continues most extravagantly wild, and strange beyond description. We frequently sailed through and through the cliffs, underneath vaulted pyramids of stupendous height. There is enclosed a view of one of the most majestic arches.

On a lofty promontory, betwixt two immense chasms in the precipice, are the remains of an old building, called *Pfoddom Castle*. Some pieces of cannon lying sunk in the bank without, indicate its having been a fortress: its last possessors were of the name of *Keith*, some distant branch of the *Marechal* family.

From thence, a mile out to sea, there is a very large rock, called *Crag-foreland*, which rising gradually to the top, may be climbed up without difficulty. It has neither soil nor verdure on it; but several flats of considerable extent, the resort of various sea-fowl;



ARCH near the BULLS of BUCHAN.



fowl; and from its top an ample prospect of the cliffs along the coast to *Slains Castle*; and of the town and harbour of *Peterhead* to the north.

HERE the coast flattens, and forms a spacious bay, in which vessels of any burden may ride secure, except from the easterly storms; and as this head-land is a very general rendezvous for shipping, exertions are making to extend a great pier into such a depth of water, as to yield a safe retreat for vessels, and cover them from the heavy seas, which the south-east winds throw in. Safe and commodious harbours are of much consequence on the east coast of *Scotland*, where there are few. This one is capable of vast improvement; it has singular advantages from nature, which put it in the power of art to make it a port of very general utility to the nation. Being the eastmost point in *Scotland*, ships from *Hudson's Bay*, *Greenland*, *Norway*, and the *Baltic*, here make the land, and when meeting with contrary winds, anchor in the road; sometimes a dozen or twenty sail in a day. To make the protection, which the trade experience here, more complete, part of a very extensive plan is at present executing. A large channel, covered from the east by two islands and a chain of rock, is to be deepened, and guarded by piers, so that vessels may get out, either to the south or north, from within the promontory. The present port will be twenty feet deep at high water; so that it may even admit a sloop of war. But the funds of this very public-spirited undertaking, are by no means equal to the zeal of the managers; unless they obtain great assistance from the public; perhaps, without the aid of government, the design can never be rendered complete; they have nearly

2 exhausted

EXPORTS. MANUFACTURES.

exhausted all their resources, in the few thousand pounds which it has already cost *.

IN its present state, the harbour will contain forty or fifty sail; and yields safety in twelve feet water.

THE great advantage proposed, by deepening the port, is, that vessels would float at half-tide, and get through the channel northwards. The number of ships continually passing and re-passing, are an amusing spectacle. The offing here was found a rich field of captures for the *French* privateers last war; and commodore *Boys* was stationed awhile with his squadron to disperse them.

THERE are ten or twelve vessels, from fifty to two hundred tons burden, belonging to the port, which trade to the *Baltic*, *Norway*, *Holland*, *England*, &c. About ten thousand bolls of victual, corn, malt, and meal, are sometimes exported hence in a season. Manufactures are encreasing; some threads, which have a great character at the *London* market, are made here; an extensive woollen manufacture is established of late, and is thought in a flourishing way.

THEY are here supplied with the greatest variety of fishes. The cod and ling fishing, in particular, employs a number

* "Since the above was written, the gentlemen of the place have drawn out a memorial, and, with the concurrence of the neighbouring members of parliament, had it laid before Lord *North*; and obtained an order from the treasury for five hundred pounds a year from the annexed estates, to be continued seven years. This will considerably forward the work: And, as it would appear, that the government has it also in view to build a fort there, the whole design may be ere long completed."

of hands. Beside what are daily used in the town and country, large quantities are dried on the rocks; and sent to a great distance: they are deemed excellent in that state. About five hundred barrels are sent annually to *London* pickled; and yield from thirty to forty shillings the barrel.

A COMPANY have lately fitted out some vessels for the cod and ling fishery on the banks off *Barra head*, among the western isles. This promises to be a successful undertaking.

THE cargoes of two vessels sent last season, yielded a thousand pounds. A salmon-fishery upon the *Ugie*, a small river, which falls into a sandy bay north of the promontory, in the more favourable seasons will produce five hundred barrels.

ABOUT fifty tons of kelp, near two thousand pounds value, are annually sent from hence to *Newcastle*; the process of making it, I dare say, you are no stranger to. The rocks, which are dry at low water, are the beds of great quantities of seaweed; which is cut, carried to the beach, and dried: a hollow is dug in the ground three or four feet wide; round its margin are laid a row of stones, on which the sea-weed is placed, and set on fire within, and quantities of this fuel being continually heaped upon the circle, there is in the center a perpetual flame; from which a liquid, like melted metal, drops into the hollow beneath: when it is full, as it commonly is ere the close of day, all heterogeneous matter being removed, the kelp is wrought with iron rakes, and brought to an uniform consistence, in a state of fusion.

WHEN cool, it consolidates into a heavy, dark-coloured, alkaline substance; which undergoes in the glass-houses a second vitrification,

MINERAL WELL.

vitrification, and assumes a perfect transparency; the progress by which, thus, a parcel of sea-weed, formerly the slimy bed of seals, or dreary shelter of shell-fish, is converted into a crystal lustre for an assembly-room, or a set of glasses for his majesty's table, is a metamorphosis that might be a subject for an entertaining tale.

A MINERAL WELL, in the summer-months, gives great gaiety to the place; its salutary virtues have been long, I believe justly, celebrated. The salt-water baths adjoining are much frequented in nervous disorders: their effect in strengthening the constitution is often surprizing. Owing to the open peninsulated situation, the air of this place is esteemed peculiarly pure and healthful; even the fogs, rising from the sea, are thought to be medicinal: the town is therefore much enlivened by the concourse of company who frequent it on these accounts.

WITHOUT derogating any thing from the merits of the baths and mineral, one may reasonably conclude, that the custom of walking several hours before breakfast, and meeting the morning breezes from the sea, along these cool and refreshing shores; the probability of meeting with choice of companions, as an inducement to these early rambles; the perpetual cheerfulness indulged by society entirely disengaged from business and care, and their various inventions to chase away languor; probably contribute no less to the health of the company, than the peculiar virtues of the healing spring.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

Abbey of Deer, May 29.

A FEW miles inland from *Peterhead*, stopped at *Inverugie* castle, the antient seat of the earl *Marechals* of *Scotland*. It is a large and lofty pile, situated on a steep bank of the river; two very high round towers bound the front, and in their decaying state, give the castle an air of much antiquity and grandeur. Vast rows of venerable trees, inclosing the adjoining garden, add to the effect of the decayed buildings.

THIS, Lord *Marechal's* principal residence, shared the common fate of the numerous castles, and went to ruin, after he left the country, in consequence of the false step taken in the year fifteen.

IT is said one of that family, so deeply offended *Buchannan*, that he took revenge, by omitting, as far as possible, any account of their martial achievements in his history.

CAMUS, the general of the *Danes*, in memory of whose defeat the monument at *Panbride* was raised, fell by the hand of an ancestor of the earls *Marechal*: and that event rendered the name of *Keith* no less famed and honourable, than the bravery of a *Hay* had done on a similar occasion.

THE late earl, in his exile, was graciously received by the king of *Prussia*, and received from him the government of *Neufchatel*; a place that yielded him *otium cum dignitate*, which greatly alleviated the weight of his misfortunes. After concili-

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KING OF PRUSSIA'S LETTER.

ating the favour of the crown, through the mediation of his royal patron, he came over and spent some time in *Scotland*: during his stay the king of *Prussia* wrote to him.

You will readily pardon my inclosing a copy of his letter, as it seems nobly expressive of that monarch's style.

" I cannot allow the *Scotch* the happiness of possessing you altogether. Had I a fleet, I would make a descent on their coasts, and carry you off. The banks of the *Elbe* do not admit of these equipments; I must therefore have recourse to your friendship, to bring you to him who esteems and loves you. I loved your brother with my heart and soul: I was indebted to him for great obligations: this is my right to you, this my title.

" I spend my time as formerly; only at night I read *Virgil's Georgics*, and go to my garden in the morning, to make my gardener reduce them to practice; he laughs both at *Virgil* and me, and thinks us both fools.

" Come to ease, to friendship, and philosophy; these are what, after the bustle of life, we must all have recourse to."

The earl accordingly returned into *Prussia*, where he died, and the line is extinct.

When at *Peterhead*, he sent his secretary to examine the state of *Inverugie* castle; but would not go himself; probably because it must have been distressing, to have beheld his once splendid place of residence, now in so ruinous, desolate, and forlorn a situation.

A MILE

A MILE or two farther up the *Ugie*, there is a very large old building, with a tower, the walls amazingly thick, and fortified round. In some early age it has been a place of singular strength: the *Cbeyns*, of whom little memorable but the name remains, are said to have been its last possessors.

The ruin, from time immemorial, has been called the *Old-crag*, and *Ravens-castle*; names it probably has only obtained in later periods, after it was deserted and void of inhabitants. It must be therefore of considerable antiquity; but I could find neither annals nor tradition concerning its founders.

HERE, on a pleasant bank of the same river, shaded from the north by a woody hill, lie the remains of an abbey; the form of a cross, in which it had been built, may still be traced among the ruins. Most of the doors and windows have large round arches; but the work has been altogether plain; no vestiges of carving, nor even mouldings, are discoverable on any part.

IN the beginning of the thirteenth century, *Cummin* earl of *Buchan*, dedicated a considerable extent of land for the *abbey*; and a body of *Cistertian* monks came from *Kinlofs* to the possession of it, in the year 1218.

THE last *Abbot* of the monastery, was of the name of *Keith*, a brother to lord *Marechal*; a man of distinguished virtue and good sense: he died at *Paris* in the year 1551*.

THERE are dispersed through this country numbers of high stones, placed on the rising grounds; some of them would appear to have been originally single, of the monumental kind;

* *Spotiswood's Account of Religious Houses*, 258.

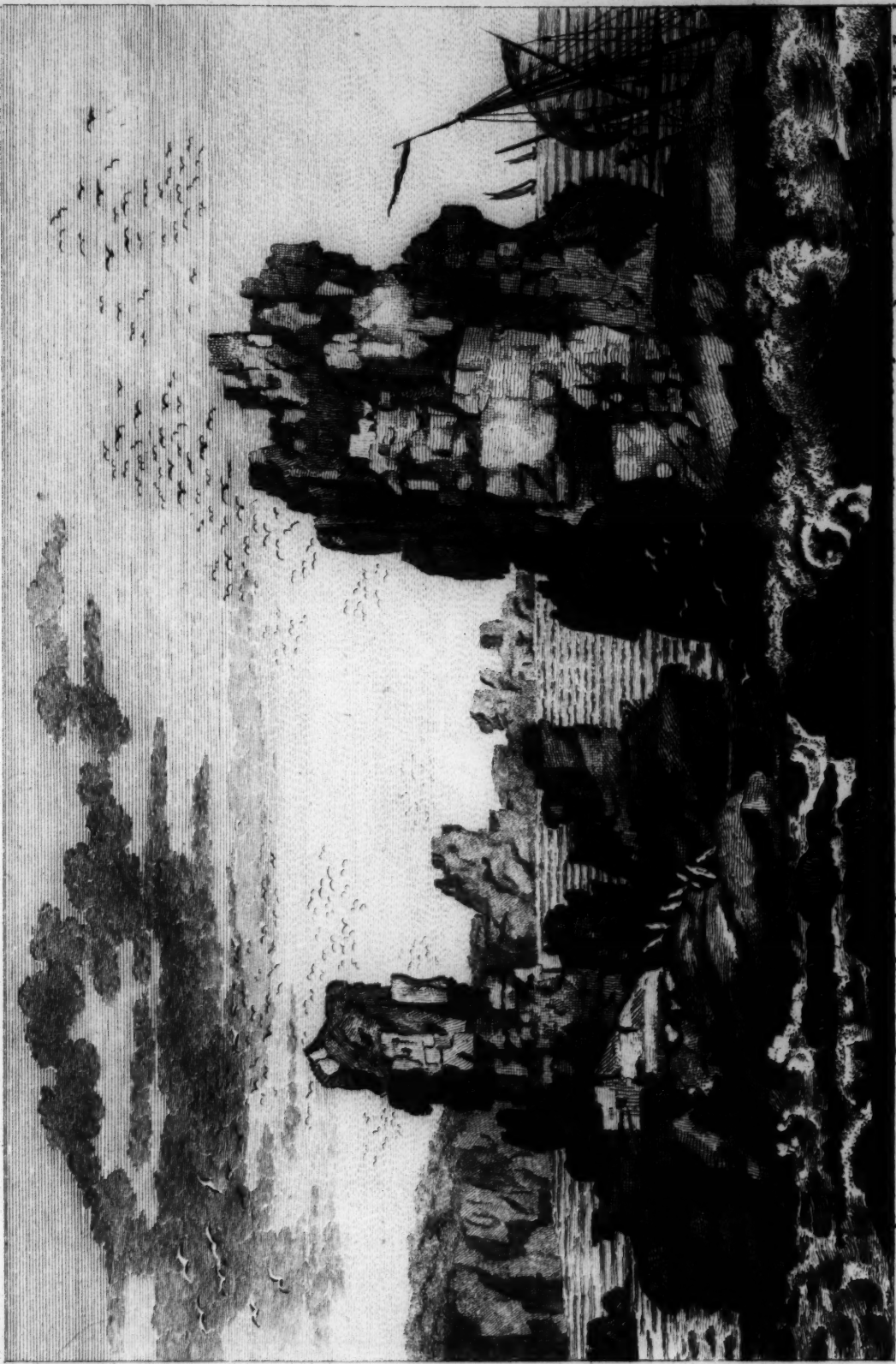
DRUID TEMPLES.

but in general, they have belonged to *Druid-temples*. On the top of one hill, near to the village of *Oldeer*, there is one *Druidical* circle pretty entire; the three stones which had composed the altar, are of an enormous size. Near it are several vestiges of cells, which the people call *the Piets houses*; and may have been the residence of the *Druids*.

You have frequently observed the single columns, which you know were in use to commemorate great events, or the fall of illustrious persons, from the earliest times, till they were superseded by the carved pillars, or by the ornamented crosses*.

* Tour in *Scotl.* Part I. 172, 203. Part II. 167, 177, 200.



*Cordier pin.**P. Nord comp.*

ROCKS near TROUP HEAD.

LETTER VIII.

Troup-head, May 31st.

I HAVE the pleasure of writing to you, from this vast promontory, charmed with the prospect of such an extensive sweep of bold shores, as stretch on either hand: in many places the precipices, a hundred yards high, over-hang the ocean; the clouds hovering under their brows. Sometimes the cliffs, disjointed from the main, assume the appearance of stately ruins, and massy towers rising out of the deep; sometimes form into vast and rugged amphitheatres, and afford noble pieces of picturesque scenery. In one place, the cape rests upon a shapely circular pillar of vast size, surrounded at the base with deep water, its capital spreading into an enormous pediment of the over-hanging concretions. It yields a most magnificent scene, to look down from above on the prodigious cliffs, into which the front of the promontory is broken: the airy height of the immense rows of shelves, where the *kitty-wakes* make their nests; the dark and hideous caverns underneath, where various sea-fowl have their unmolested abode; the strange forms of the huge rocks and precipices; conspire to yield the highest entertainment to all who can admire the native majesty of the works of creation.

ONE large vault passes compleatly through a point of the promontory. The entrance into it, is but like a rent in the mass of rock, and leads into a dark and narrow cavern, rugged at first, but gradually swelling into a fine arched roof, terminates in a most

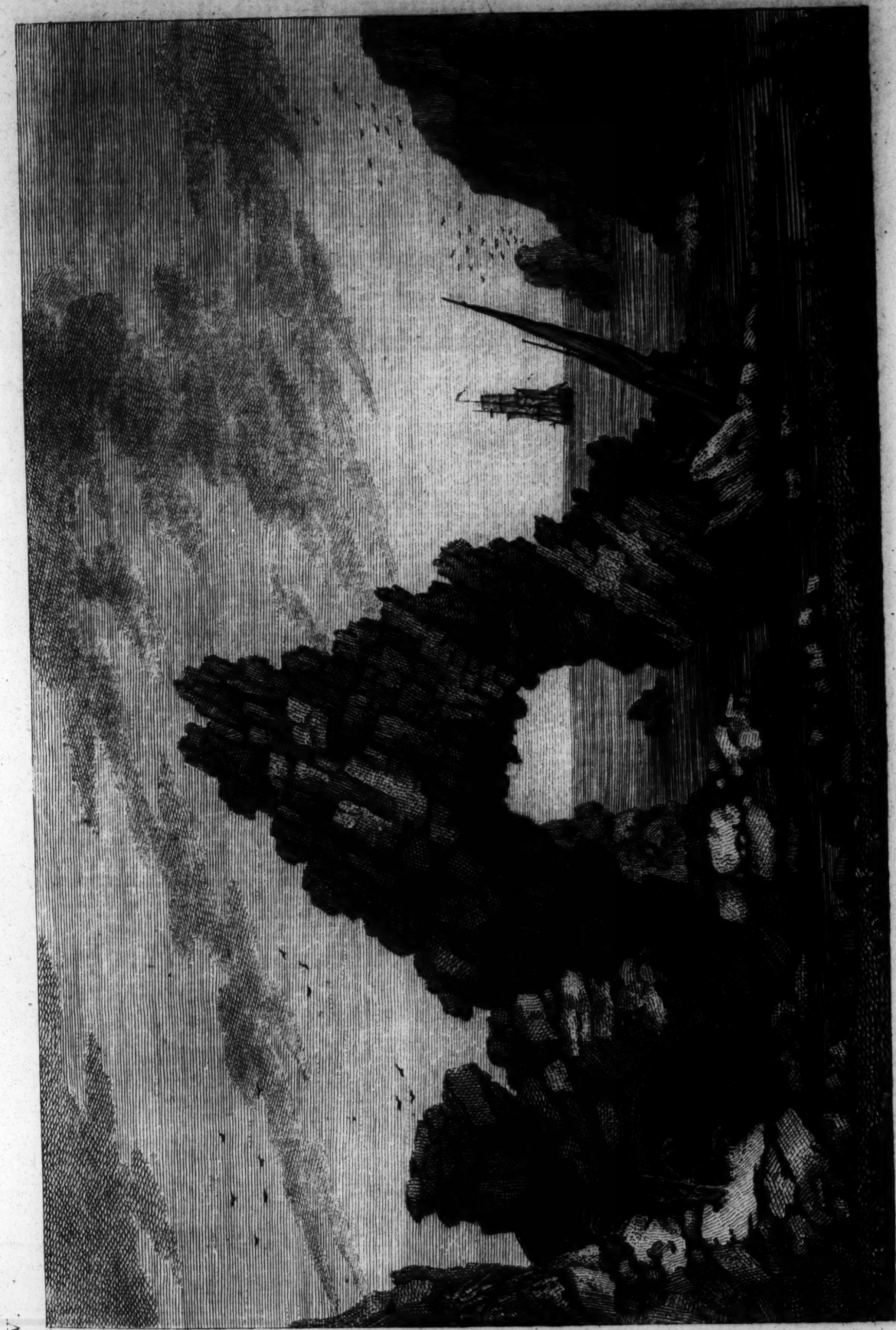
HILL OF MONNAN.

most spacious dome, open to the sea. Several other caves on this coast run a far way under ground; some of them, after winding beneath the rock, return by different passages to the shore. These are much frequented by swallows and rock-pigeons: though some of the least accessible, are the resort of *coots*, *shags*, and *corvorants*.

UNDER the cliffs at *Melrofs*, among the lower rocks which project into the sea, there is a good slate quarry, and one at *Pennin*, of a very hard concrete substance, for mill-stones; the paths to these, down along the face of the precipices, are the most hideous imaginable, not to be attempted but by those who have been early accustomed to them.

THE creeks in some places penetrate much farther into the main than where the sea flows; and form into deep and rocky glens; where the rivulets, falling from the neighbouring hills, murmur in their deep-worn channels, and exhibit some charming cascades. In the bottom of a small bay, there is one singular, broad, perforated pyramid; through which at high water a boat may sail; and in time of ebb, one may walk on the shelves beneath the arch: but I shall not attempt to be more particular: the enclosed sketches will give you an idea of some of these strange crags.

YESTERDAY, on leaving the abbey of *Deer*, I came along the side of the hill of *Monnan*, not a steep, but lofty mountain; it is the first land mariners generally discover, when coming to this coast from the *Baltic*. From it is a delightful prospect, for a dozen of miles, down to the coast, of a fine, champaign, rich corn-country, interspersed with several villas. On a mossy plain



ROCKS near BAMFF.



to the north are several mounts, formed of loose stones, called the *Carns of Memfie*. Three of them are very large; each measuring from sixty to seventy yards in circumference, and from twelve to fifteen feet in height. One of them has been lately cut into the center, but they found neither urns nor stone coffins, only some human bones, in the ground beneath: many of the stones in the heart of the opened carn, have been burned almost to vitrification. The smaller carns are scattered at a distance irregularly over the plain; and where inclosures are forming on the heath, yield a ready quarry to the farmers.

SUCH heaps have not been passed unnoticed by you. I avoid repetition, as I would have this work considered as merely supplemental to your's; therefore refer the reader to your accounts of similar memorials*.

ON coming down to the coast, five or six miles from hence, saw, on a high peninsulated rock, the remains of *Dundarg-castle*, a place of strength in the fourteenth century. Vestiges of a large court of buildings may be traced on the top of the rock; but the only part remaining any thing entire, is a strong arched gateway, which had guarded the entrance into the castle. Near the neck, which joins it to the main, there is a triple ditch, and ramparts of considerable extent; but whether these have been outworks, strengthening the fortress, or banks thrown up against it,

* Tour in *Scotl.* 1769, 153 to 155.—Tour in *Scotl.* 1772, Part I: 206, 208, 209.—Tour in *Scotl.* 1772, Part II. 106.—and the different kinds, very fully, in Tour in *Wales*, from 281 to 288.

may.

WALLACE-TOWER.

may not be easily determined. * *Buchanan* mentions its having undergone a siege in the year 1334.

HENRY lord *Beaumont* possessed himself, by force of arms, of a large extent of lands in that corner; claimed the title of earl of *Buchan*, and garrisoned *Dundarg* for his chier place of residence; and was in that countenanced by *Baliol*, the nominal king.

ALEXANDER *de Moubray*, a man of power, disputed with *Beaumont* his right to these possessions, and, patronized by *Murray* regent of *Scotland*, came down with a body of forces, and besieged him in *Dundarg*. *Beaumont*, despairing of relief, capitulated, and obtained leave to retire into *England* †.

A FEW miles inland saw the ruins of a strongly-vaulted oblong building, called *Wallace-tower*. There is little remarkable about it but the name it bears. Our historians agree in representing *Wallace* as one of the most distinguished warriors of the nation; as such, even this rude monument of his fame may be looked on with some degree of respect. It was in the end of the thirteenth century that *Wallace* was chosen *Protector*, by the states of *Scotland*. He rescued many of the fortresses from the hands of *Edward's* army, and wished to rekindle the spirit of freedom and independence; but notwithstanding all his efforts, his country found it eligible to seek an easier path to safety, by swearing allegiance to the king of *England*. If this tower therefore ever sheltered that warrior, it must be near five hundred years old, and claims some notice for its antiquity.

* Lib. 9.

† *Annals of Scotl.* II. 174.

LETTER IX.

Cullen, June 3d.

A VIEW of *Cullen-house* is inclosed, not taken in front, but on purpose to exhibit its romantic situation on the verge of a rocky precipice; together with the magnificent arch thrown over the entrance of the glen, which opens the communication with the pleasure-grounds on the opposite hill. The glen winds up into the country several miles, and is full of wood; there are charming walks cut along the side of the rivulet; the banks of it often precipitous, picturesque, and rocky.

IN *Cullen-house*, the library is elegant and extensive, enriched with many thousand volumes, generally of the most expensive and splendid order.

ON a circular mount opposite, are vestiges of a fort, probably *Danish*, which had guarded the landing-place at that corner of the bay. Time has not yet levelled the surrounding ramparts, of which there are three rows on the declivity of the hill. Among the rubbish of buildings on the top, there is a great deal of burnt stones, and vitrified stuff, the consequence of large fires having been made on the spot; or, perhaps, the fort in some period has been burnt down; for to me it would seem highly improbable, that ever an application of fire had been made, to cement buildings, however others may have been amused with that theory.

BUT should any body be disposed in future to make such experiment,

H

THREAD AND LINEN

periment, I adjoin the most approved receipt. The method is simple:—"Take a mountain, whose summit contains a moderate area, bounded as much as possibly with precipices, except at the place you are to enter. On the brink of these precipices place large stones, the drier the better, *quant. suff.* and let the interstices be filled with vitrescible iron ore; to this heap make a backing of loose stones, piled carelessly *behind the said brink*; then build a stack of wood *round the whole outside* of the wall, kindle a fire, and the business is done*." Should any dull fellow object to the foundation for the backing and fuel, he may be told it is among the *Artes deperditæ*, unless preserved by the academy at *Laputa*, who have the secret of condensing air, and building houses from the roof down to the foundation†.

You took notice of the thread and linen manufacture at this place. It did not before occur to me to mention a very extensive one carried on at *Banff*. I was the other day favoured with a paper relative to it, which I doubt not will prove acceptable, as it evinces of how much consequence these are to the country.

"It is *Dutch* flax they chiefly use in that manufacture; and annually import about three thousand five hundred matts, which, at an average of £. 3. 5 s. each, costs upwards of £. 11,000. The flax is beat in water-mills, and then heckled; that operation employs about sixty men: when given out to spin, it does not employ less than four thousand individuals; and yields a hundred and fifty thousand spindles of yarn, which

* *Archæologia*, V. 258.

† *Gulliver's Travels*, voy. *Lap.* c. v.

“ circulates about £. 10,000 among the spinners. The doubling
“ and twisting the yarn is done at *Banff*, which employs about
“ two hundred women and children : and at the bleach-field,
“ engages the labour and attention of forty people more. These
“ threads, when sent to *Nottingham* or *Leicester*, where they are
“ wove into stockings, are about £. 30,000 sterling value.”

THE good effects of the spinning is sensibly felt in the neighbouring villages ; that ready encouragement given to their industry, greatly promotes their diligence ; the females are often able, by their wheels, to pay the small rent of their farm, so that the labour of the men is appropriated solely to the maintenance of the family, which by this means becomes much more amply supplied with every necessary.

It is with regret the managers of these manufactures find that they cannot be supplied with flax raised at home. The principal obstacle seems to be, the want of hands experienced in the management of it, when taken off the ground ; for many, who are successful enough in raising the most promising crops, have often the mortification to find them in a great measure ruined, ere they can be brought to the heckle.

AT *Portsoy* there is a similar manufacture of stocking threads, for the *London* and *Nottingham* markets, carried on to a great extent. In some seasons three hundred tons of flax are there imported from *Holland* ; but *Cullen*, *Huntly*, *Keith*, and other manufacturing villages, are supplied thence : that article is therefore an expence of twenty or thirty thousand pounds a year, to this corner alone, which might be evaded by raising flax at home. It is however in some degree an equivalent, that victual is exported

to at least as large an amount: in some years fifty thousand bolls, equal to forty thousand *English* quarters, of barley, malt, pease, &c. are shipped from *Portsoy*.

THERE are generally from fifteen to twenty vessels belonging to the place, from forty to a hundred and fifty tons burden: for some of these profitable employment is found, at the fisheries among the *western isles*; each is equipped with three boats, and requires eighteen hands: they sail early in the spring, about the beginning of *February*, for *Loch-Garloch*; and apply to the cod-fishing there until the first of *May*, when it is usual to go to the banks off *Barra head*, where they catch ling. All the fish which they take are salted and dried on the spot: and the vessels return in *August*, on purpose to send their cargoes to the proper markets along with salmon. The vessels which carry these to the coasts of *Spain* and *Portugal*, or up the *Mediterranean*; together with those which have been sent out with grain; return with wines, salt, flax, wood, iron, and whatever other articles are required, either for home consumption, or those branches of trade in which the inhabitants of the place are engaged.

ON a peninsulated rock, betwixt *Portsoy* and *Cullen*, lie the remains of *Castle Findlater*. The top of the rock has been so thoroughly covered with buildings, that the outer walls, particularly fronting the sea, precisely correspond with the face of the precipice. Owing to the irregular surface of the rock, some of the lower rooms are so contrived, as to have their inner ends of the solid mass, well cut, and in many places the plaistering remains on it entire. The apartments are strongly vaulted above, and have large windows, which look to the sea; but there seems

to

to have been little else than dead walls on those parts of the rock which are next the neck that joins it to the main. About a hundred yards from the isthmus, there are conspicuous vestiges of a double rampart, which has been drawn round as an outwork to defend the castle. Within the rampart are the remains of several stone buildings, probably store-houses, stables, &c. and an area, ample enough for exercising many hundred men.

THE castle was relinquished by the family of *Findlater*, for more commodious and inland seats, towards the end of *James VIth's* reign. The dawn of a more auspicious age, when civil discords were subsiding, would be sufficient inducement to the noblemen and chieftains, to chuse more fertile and pleasant situations, where they could plant, have gardens, and enjoy rural entertainment.

THE head-land, which forms on the east the bay of *Cullen*, presents a noble scene towards the ocean, of a lofty, smooth, and extensive precipice; at the foot of the cliff, there is a level beach, composed of mouldered shells, which are gathering soil: but would be a valuable acquisition to the neighbouring farms, if an easy means could be found of raising them to the high grounds.

DESCRIPTION OF

LETTER X.

Forres, June 7th, 1776.

YOUR instructions with respect to *Forres pillar*, made it an object that demanded my best attention. Knowing “* that it far surpassed, in magnificence and grandeur, the other “obelisks in *Scotland*,” and was said to be “the most stately “monument of the *Gothic* kind to be seen in *Europe* †,” and your solicitude with respect to the authenticity of the sculptures on it, so impressed me with an idea of its importance, that I marked the figures with the utmost vigilance and care.

MR. GORDON says, he discovered “† several of a monstrous “form, resembling four-footed beasts with human heads,” &c.; but that must have been the consequence of a cursory observation only. There are no monsters on it, except so far as the rudeness of these weather-beaten sculptures render them so. You may rely on the fidelity of the drawing; and I made the following remarks.

THAT in the first division, underneath the *Gothic* ornaments at the top, are nine horses with their riders, marching forth in order: in the next, is a line of warriors on foot, brandishing their weapons, and appear to be shouting for the battle. The

* Iter Septen.

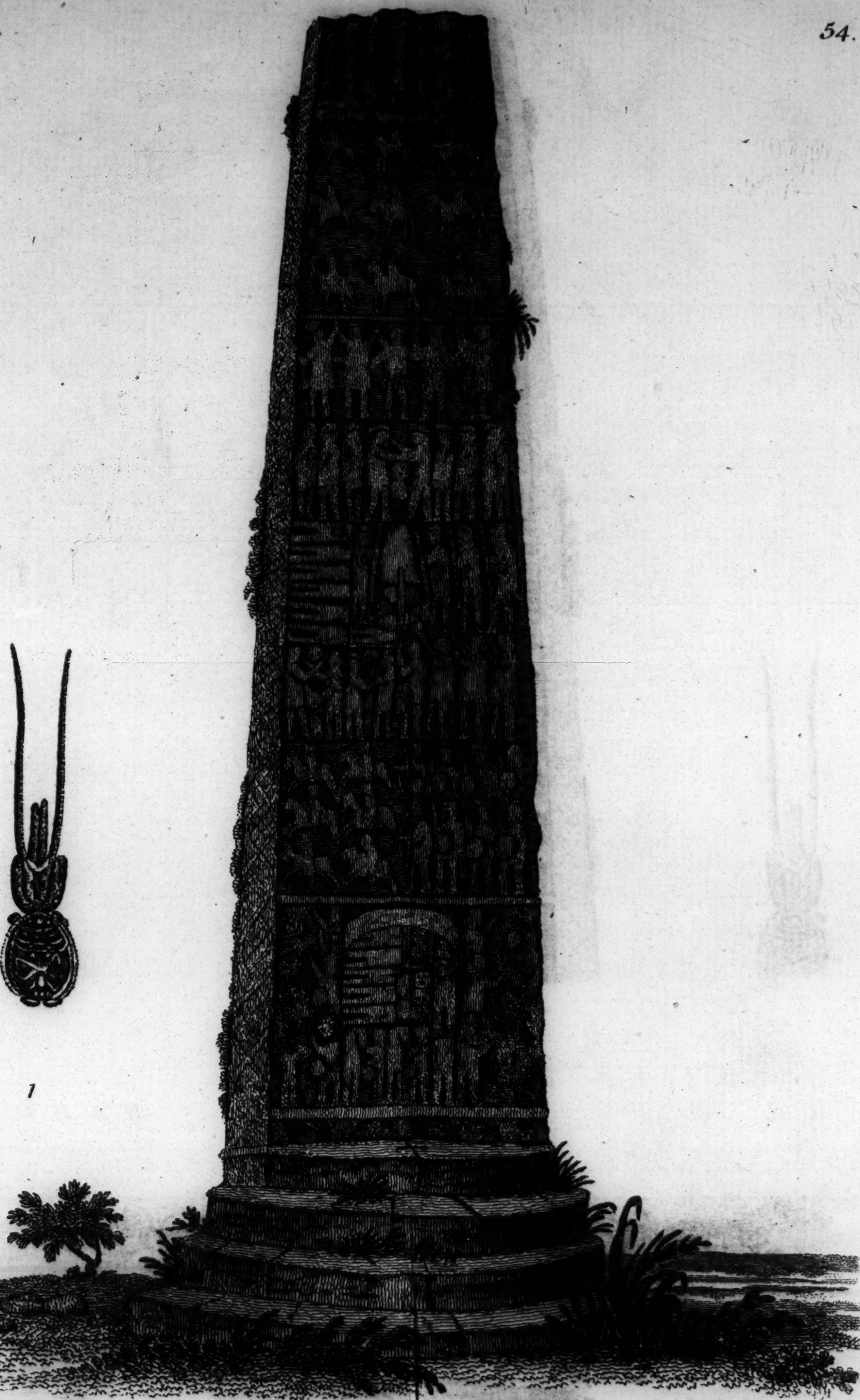
† Guthrie's Hist. Scotl.

‡ Iter Septen. 158.



J. Ingleby Sc.

P I L L A R A T F O R R





import of the attitudes in the third division very dubious; their expression indefinite.

THE figures which form a square in the middle of the column, are pretty complex, but distinct: four serjeants, with their halberds, guard a canopy, under which are placed several human heads, which have belonged to the dead bodies piled up at the left of the division: one appears in the character of executioner, severing the head from another body; behind him are three trumpeters sounding their trumpets; and before him two pair of combatants fighting with sword and target.

A TROOP of horse next appears, put to flight by infantry, whose first line have bows and arrows; the three following, swords and targets. In the lowermost division now visible, the horses seem to be seized by the victorious party, their riders beheaded, and the head of their chief hung in chains, or placed in a frame; the others being thrown together beside the dead bodies, under an arched cover.

THE greatest part of the other side of the obelisk, occupied by a sumptuous cross, is covered over with an uniform figure elaborately raised, and interwoven with great mathematical exactness; of this, on account of its singularity, there is given a representation at the foot of the column. Under the cross are two august personages, with some attendants much obliterated, but evidently in an attitude of reconciliation; and, if the monument was erected in memory of the peace concluded between *Malcolm* and *Canute*, upon the final retreat of the *Danes**, these large figures may represent the reconciled monarchs.

* Tour in *Scotl.* 1769, 165.

ON the edge below the fret-work, are some rows of figures joined hand-in-hand, which may also imply the new degree of confidence and security which took place, after the feuds were composed, which are characterized on the front of the pillar. But to whatever particular transaction it may allude, it can hardly be imagined, that in so early an age of the arts in *Scotland*, as it must have been raised, so elaborate a performance would have been undertaken, but in consequence of an event of the most general importance; it is therefore surprising, that no distincter traditions of it arrived at the æra when letters were known.

AT *Gordon Castle*, the grandeur and elegant finishing of the apartments—the variety of pleasant scenery exhibited in the surrounding fields, formed, to a vast distance, into one continued garden—and the sumptuous prospects which the castle yields from almost every point of view—engaged much of that time and attention which I should have bestowed in more fully finishing the enclosed sketch. No drawing, however, can now be made of *Gordon Castle*, that could at all ascertain its state of antient grandeur. The duke is causing it to assume so much appearance of modern splendor, that it scarcely bears a distant resemblance to what it was when you saw it. Though still in character of a castle, it is at once an elegant and majestic edifice; it extends upwards of five hundred and fifty feet in front; and the higher parts of the building, towering amidst the lofty trees in the park, present an image of magnificence to all the country round,

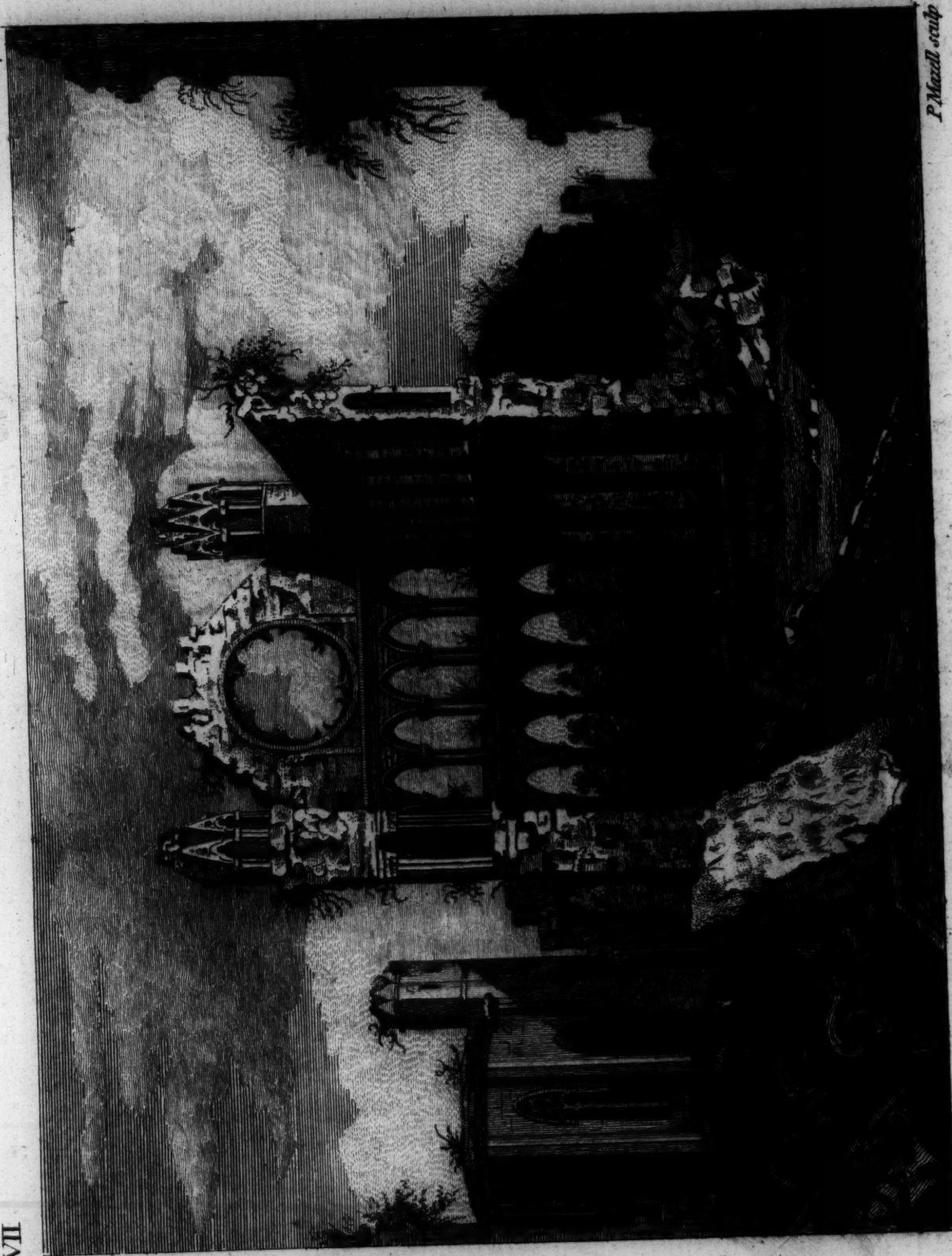
IN



GORDON CASTLE.



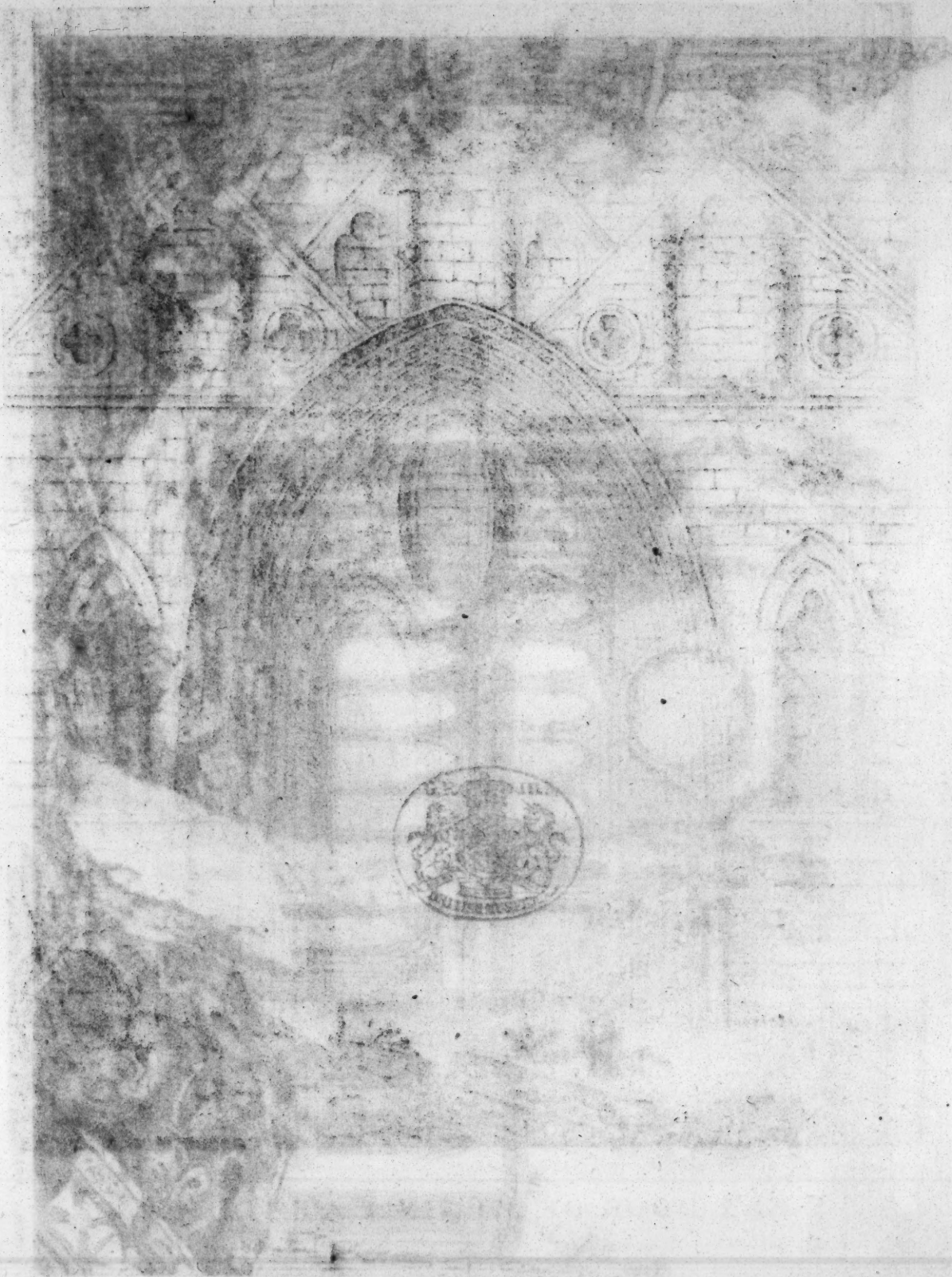


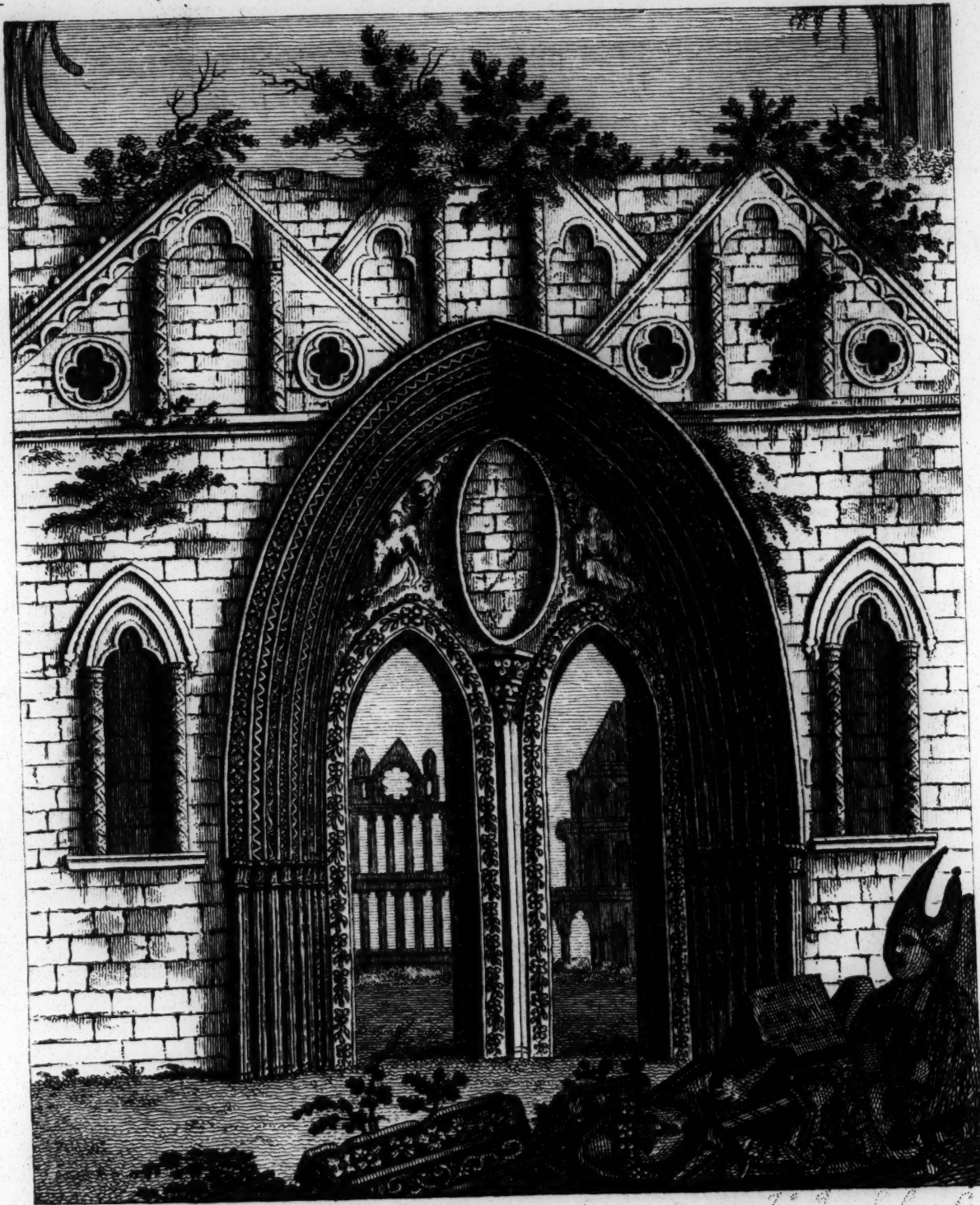


P. Macdell sculp

C. Gordon pinx

ELGIN CATHEDRAL.





In Ingleby's
WEST DOOR OF ELGIN CATHEDRAL.

IN *Innes-House*, a seat of lord *Fife*, in *Moray*, are several good pictures; in particular, portraits of the royal line for many ages past, to that of his present majesty. *Spinie-castle* makes a good vista to *Innes-house*. Its venerable remains still indicate what its grandeur has been whilst the palace of the bishops of *Moray*.

I SPENT much time amid the beautiful and noble ruins of the cathedral of *Elgin*; many parts of that fine building have still the remains of much grandeur and dignity in them. According to your desire, I have made a delineation of the west door; but find the richness of these ornaments can hardly be expressed in a small drawing. It is not enough to say, that they are done in very high relief; for often the flowers and foliage are entirely raised from the hollow of the mouldings in which they run; and thus, by a most elaborate execution, there is given a peculiar elegance of effect to the carvings. Over each entry there is a figure on a pedestal encircled with clusters of grapes, and however unusual the emblem, seems to be an angel on its knee, presenting a cornucopia, perhaps expressing the bounty of Providence tendered for the support of the temple. The remarkable proofs of superior genius and ability disclosed in the ornamental parts of that structure, are the less to be wondered at, when it is considered, that not only almost the whole interest of this country was, in different ages, engaged in adding to its magnificence; but that also, at the Pope's desire, contributions were raised over all *Europe*, and the most expert artists sent to complete the work.

I

THE

THE BURGH OF MORAY.

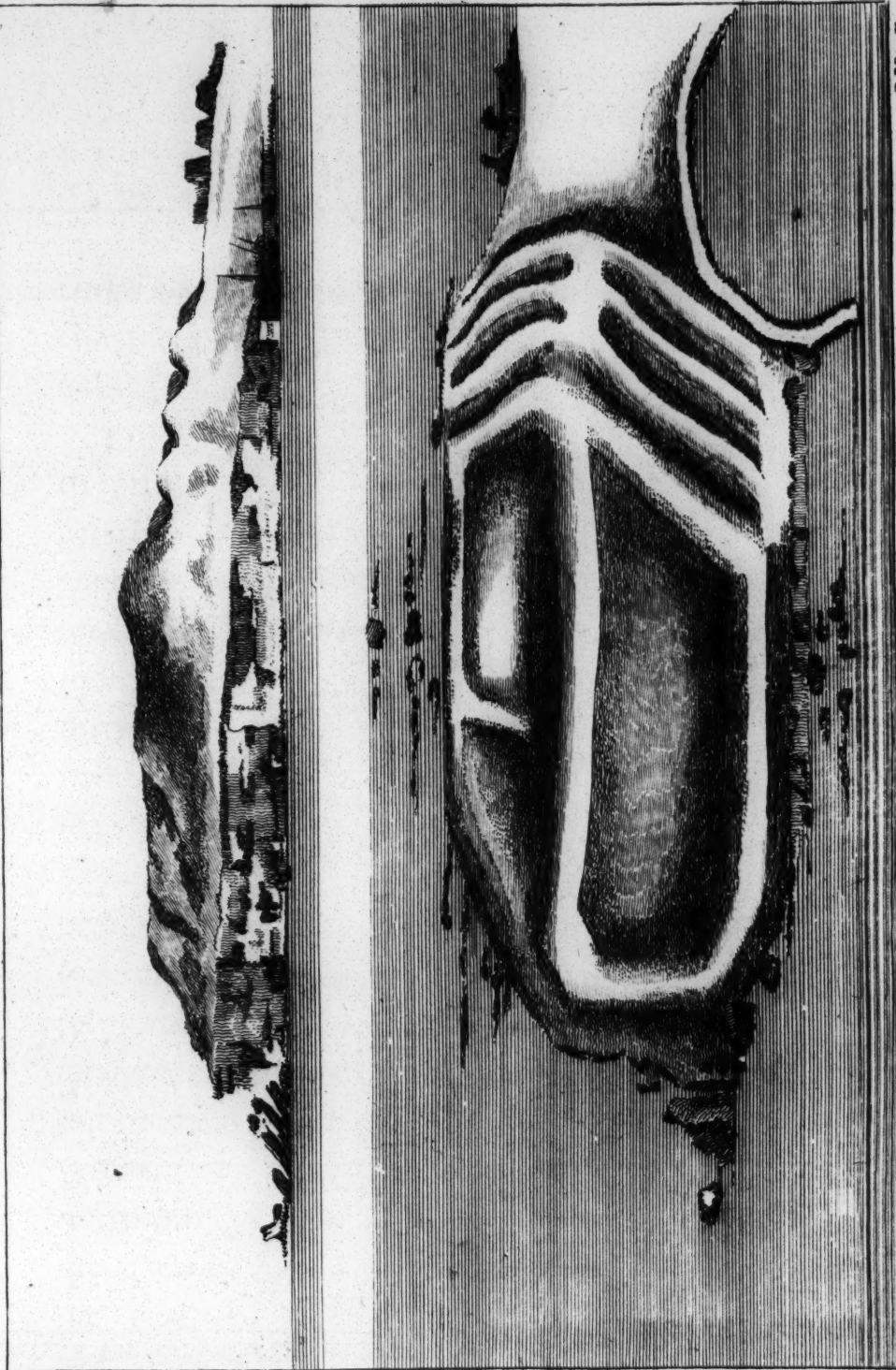
THE *Burgh of Moray*, a very antient and respectable fortress, terminates a narrow promontory projecting into the firth, about five miles from *Elgin**. This head-land was, in the end of the tenth or beginning of the eleventh century, fortified by the *Danes*, and of a peninsula made an island; and was one of the most celebrated places of rendezvous of the *buccaneers* from *Norway*. The vast ramparts still remaining, bear the weightiest testimony to its great strength in some former ages. An immense mound of earth and stones surrounds the area of the fort, and will be a lasting memorial of the labour bestowed on making it impregnable. The triple ditch and rampart, which defended the neck, are yet neat and entire. The top had been defended by logs of oak piled on one another. Many pieces are still to be seen half burnt, which makes it evident, that this strong hold was destroyed by fire. It was a common way of fortification in this province. One *Gillescop*, in 1228, burnt some wooden castles in *Moray*†. This probably was one, which might be possessed by some *Moravian Reguli*, after it was evacuated by the *Danes* in the reign of *Malcolm II.* To this incendiary we owe the burnt appearance; not to any attempt to form round the fort a glassy rampart‡.

THAT rocky point was admirably situated for facilitating the depredations of foreign invaders, and securing their spoil. It covers a safe landing-place in a sandy bay; and thence excursions could be easily made into the rich plains of *Moray*.

* *Buchanan*, of *Malcolm II.*

† *Annals of Scotl.* I. 149.

‡ *Archæologia*, V. 262.



BUGH of MORAY.





TRADE OF FINDHORN.

59

ONE place in the fort is marked as a burying-ground, by many moss-grown grave-stones; if there has ever been any sculpture on them, it is mostly worn away: on one there is a cross undefaced, and in good relief; on others there seemed to be some vestiges of figures and animals; but their truth too suspicious, to admit of any representation.

AT *Findhorn*, I was favoured with the following particulars, relative to the trade of that place.

THERE are ten or twelve vessels commonly belonging to the port.

Casks are sent from thence to *Sutherland* and *Caithness*

for their salmon, which are brought over in boats,

and are exported, with some others, annually to

the amount of — — — — — £. 8,500

Herrings sent also to *London* and foreign markets, 1,000

Grain, — — — — — 5,500

Linen yarn, to *Leith*, *Glasgow*, &c. — — — — — 25,000

So that their annual exports amount to about — 40,000

The goods they require in return, such as sugars,

flour, porter, hops, furniture, &c. from *London*

alone, amount in a year, to — — — — — 25,000

Coals, iron, soap, and other articles, from *Leith*, &c. 3,000

Salt for the fisheries, — — — — — 1,500

Flax, and Flax-seed, from *Holland*, — — — — — 1,500

Wines, rum, cloaths, lime, and other miscellaneous articles, — — — — — 3,000

34,000

I 2

IN

KINLOSS - ABBEY.

IN coming round the bay of *Findhorn* to *Forres*, I found *Kinloss-abbey* just in the way. Some men have been of late employed in clearing the rubbish from the ground, near to where the most remarkable parts of the building are, and have discovered rows of finely fluted pillars, which had supported other roofs of great extent: and the fragments of cornices, capitals, &c. still digging up, afford fresh evidences of that elegant simplicity of taste wherewith that *Gothic* structure abounds.

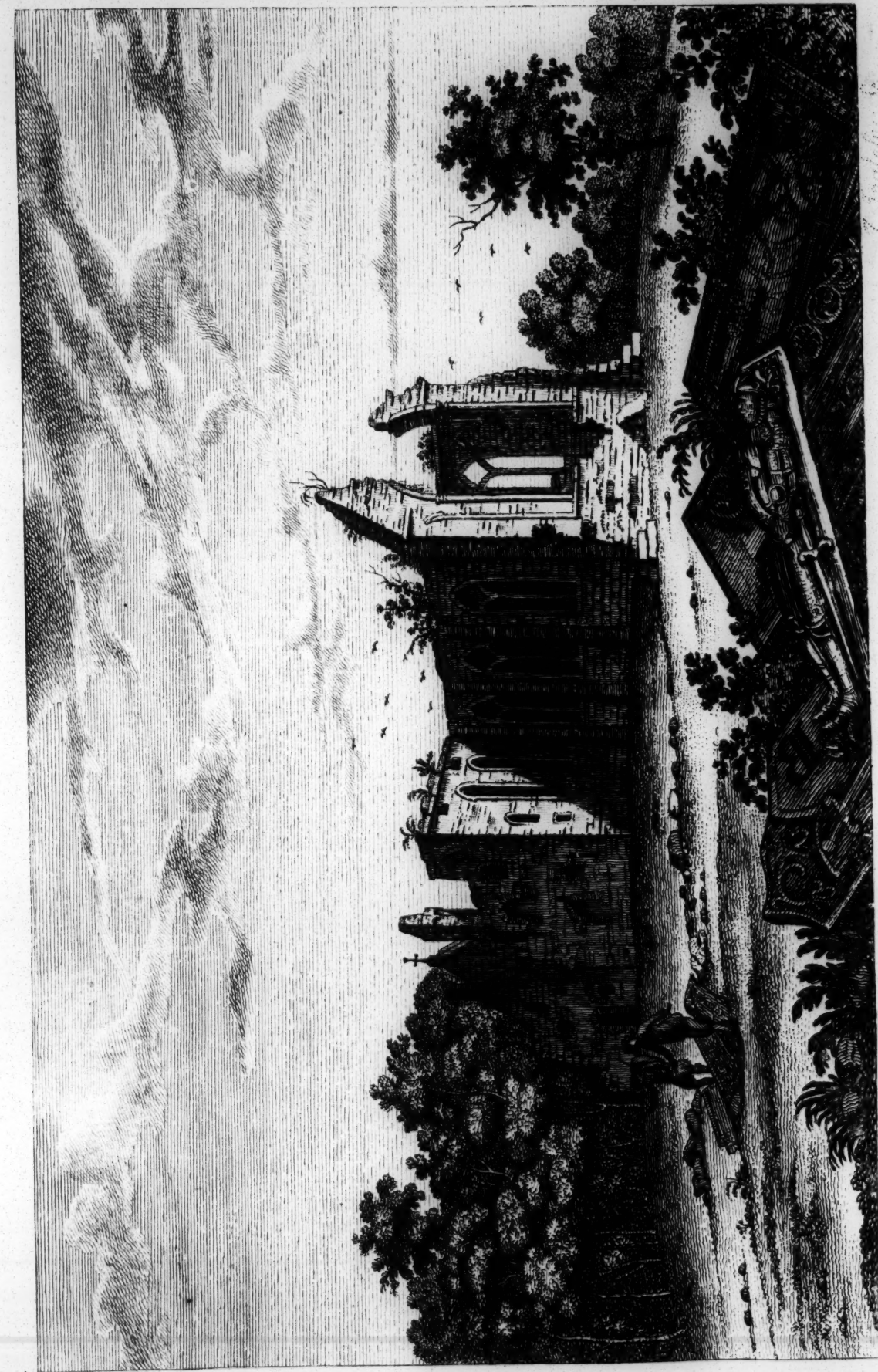
THIS monastery, as all those of the *Cistercian* order were, was dedicated to the *Virgin Mary*: the place was originally called *Templum florum*; and the sacred dwellings were reared, in memory of a miraculous blow of flowers, said to have hallowed the grave of *Duffus**.

† *ASCELINUS*, its first abbot, and a body of monks, came from *Melrofs* to the possession of it, in the twelfth century, and it went to decay soon after the reformation.

* *Dempster.*

† *Spotiswood's Account of Religious Houses.*





BEAULIEU ABBEY.

W. J. L. S.

L E T T E R XI.

Abbey of Beau-lieu, June 10th.

ROUND this ruined monastery, at present, nothing but rural images invite attention: the venerable boughs of aged trees cast their shade on either hand: within, all is silence and desolation; decaying monuments of saints and heroes, are but as “the clouds of other times,” and give a transient solemnity to the recollection of past ages. The thought of these courts having often echoed with the glad *te deums* of thousands, who, along with their temple, are now mouldering into dust, deepens the veneration which these hallowed walls inspire.

THE whole floor of the abbey is crowded with tomb-stones of various ages, many of them, I should suppose, nearly coeval with itself, which was built in the thirteenth century. The most antient of these appear to have been the lids of stone coffins; on each is a large cross, ornamented with various flowerings, sometimes with swords and other emblems at the side. And as there is not along with these any vestige of letters, it is a tacit acknowledgment, that writing was little practised at the time when these monuments were carved: for, as many of them must have been cut under the eye, and by the direction of the clergy; and as monasteries were in this country the first seats of learning, and where the fine arts were principally studied and encouraged, it must place the æra of these stones at least five hundred years back;—at the same time, a degree of neatness

neatness and elegance, which prevails both in the design and execution of the carvings, implies a refinement in taste and progress in the arts at that period, which certainly had much declined in later ages. In the vaults of the abbey, there are some remains of bodies found in the stone coffins; on the lids of these are warriors well carved, and in fine relief; these have *Latin* inscriptions in old characters round the margin, which seem to be dated in the fifteenth century; but are in general so much defaced, it is impossible to copy them.

A FEW of the most distinct figures on the older grave-stones are marked on the foreground of the view of the abbey.

IN passing from *Tarnaway* to *Calder*, I rode up through very rugged paths to the brow of the bleak and rocky mountain of *Orchany*, where there is a very antient fortress, called *Rate-castle*; it was a strong hold of the once-powerful *Cummins*, and commands an extensive prospect of all the country, down to the *Moray* firth. It has a circular tower at one end, with *Gothic* windows, and is enclosed at some distance with thick walls.

IN a burying-ground near the castle, on some stones, the bow and arrow characterize, in some degree, the genius of the people, and the age in which they were placed there.

THE mountainous scenery round *Inverness* is extremely magnificent, picturesque, and wild. The large expanse of smooth water, which the firth discloses, vessels gliding along, the old romantic castles on its banks, with the vast prospect of hills beyond, yield variety of charming landscapes.

It is computed, that there are upwards of seven thousand inhabitants in *Inverness*. About seven years ago, they were particularly enumerated, and found to amount nearly to six thousand; but since that time, several branches of manufactures have been introduced, which must have greatly increased the number of inhabitants.

THE hemp-manufacture alone, employs near eight hundred persons; sixty looms are constantly employed, in working coarse cloths for sails and sacks. *England* is the principal market for them; but large quantities are also exported to the *West Indies*.

THEY reckon, that two hundred thousand yards are annually made.

LITTLE more grain is raised in the country round *Inverness* than is necessary for the inhabitants. They meet with one great discouragement to their improvements in agriculture, in the scarcity of fuel. The mosses are much worn out; and when coals are brought from the *South-firth*, or from *England*, they burn lime at great expence. The coasting duty is a heavy obstacle here to all improvement. The fields in the neighbourhood of the town are, however, well cultivated; and they are very zealous, and at much pains to bring the declivities of the hills into better heart; but they seem more designed by nature for pasture than for tillage; and the cattle fed on them become one great resource for the support of the inhabitants. It is computed, that about forty thousand black cattle are drove from the mountains north of *Inverness*, to *England*, in a season.

LETTER

MONASTERY OF FERNE.

L E T T E R XII:

Dornoch, June 13th.

N E A R the remains of a ruined church at *Dingwal*, observed several more of these antient grave-stones, with crosses, and various ornaments on them; similar to those in the abbey of *Beau-lieu*.

THE bishop of *Offory*, when travelling through this country, stopped at *Dingwal*, and said he was much struck and pleased with its appearance, for the situation of it brought *Jerusalem* to his remembrance; and he pointed out the hill which resembled *Calvary*.

A FEW miles down from *Invergordon*, towards the coast, lie the ruins of the monastery of *Ferne*: part of it however has been converted into a church. Amidst the decayed walls, the tomb of abbot *Ferne* remains pretty entire: the effigy lies at full length, under a richly-ornamented arch, with a long inscription in old letters, but much defaced. The monastery was founded by *Ferquhard*, earl of *Ross*, in the year 1230, in the reign of *Alexander II*. The monks followed the rule of *St. Augustine*, and were of those who, on account of their white garb, received the appellation of *candidus ordo*. *Patrick Hamilton*, an abbot of that place, was among the first who suffered for favouring the opinions of *Luther*: he was burnt at the gate of *St. Salvator's* college, in *St. Andrew's*, in the year 1527.





*Monument at Sandwick,
Ross-shire.*

THE abbacy of *Ferne* was annexed to the bishoprick of *Ross*, in the reign of *James VI.* anno 1587*.

NOT far distant from the abbey, a high square column is erected, covered all over with *Saxon* characters, but illegible.

ON a bank near the shore, opposite to the ruins of a castelated house, called *Sandwick*, and about three miles east from *Ferne*, a very splendid obelisk is erected, surrounded at the base with large, well-cut flag-stones; formed like steps. Both sides of the column are elaborately covered with various enrichments, in well-finished carved work. The one face presents a sumptuous cross, with a figure of *St. Andrew* on each hand, and some uncouth animals and flowerings underneath. The central division on the reverse, renders it a piece of antiquity well worthy of preservation: there is exhibited in that such a variety of figures, birds, and animals, as seemed what might prove a curious subject of investigation; I have therefore given a distinct delineation of them, at the foot of the column, on a larger scale, that their shapes might be distinctly ascertained, and the more probable conjectures formed of their allusion.

YOU have by no means neglected observations on this species of monuments†; but I beg leave to rectify your mistake, in confining them to the south of the firth of *Moray*; for you may be assured, they are far more numerous to the north.

ON a green plain near the beach, about two miles north from *Sandwick*, under the brow of the hill, on which the seat

* *Keith's Account of Religious houses*, 245.

† *Tour in Scotl.* 1772. Part II. 166 to 169.

ANTIEN MONUMENTS:

of Mr. *M'Leod*, of *Catbol*, is situated; lies another very splendid monument, near to the ruins of a chapel, which was in an early age dedicated to the *Virgin Mary*. The proprietor, from a veneration for the consecrated ground, has enclosed it with some rows of trees; and it is well worthy of his care, for the obelisk is one of the most beautiful pieces of antient sculpture that has ever been discovered in *Scotland*. The stone is of enormous size, and has lain unnoticed on its face from time immemorial, and by that means is in the highest state of preservation. It represents the hunting of the deer with hound and horn. The waving ornaments round the margin are airy and elegant, and cut with a masterly hand. Four scepters are introduced in a very conspicuous manner above, and serve as a comment on those that appear, though less distinctly marked, on the obelisk at *Aberlemni*.

MR. *M'Leod*, of *Gueneas*, to whose great attention the discovery of the above was in a great measure owing, conducted me to several fragments of other obelisks lying on *Tarbetness*, which in all appearance had not been originally inferior to either of these that have been specified; but they are so shattered to pieces that their connection is lost.

THESE monuments are all said to have been erected in memory of defeats of the *Danes*; but there does not appear any reference, that the hieroglyphicks on them can have to such events. That they have been raised on interesting occasions, there can be little doubt; perhaps in memory of the most renowned chieftains, and their exploits, who first embraced Christianity. They are the most antient memorials of its establishment: and

if among the first expressions of public veneration for the cross, their antiquity may be considerable; for the *Keledei*, emissaries of the sacred colleges, *Columba* from *Iona*, and others, had opened a dawn of Christianity upon these northern counties in the sixth century.

To what you have said, permit me to add—it is highly probable, from the indubitable evidence which these monuments give of the expertness and genius of the artists who have been employed in designing and carving them, that every figure has had an import of some consequence, at that time understood; and what might then from custom be easily apprehended, they would not doubt of continuing intelligible to future ages also: but had they obtained the knowledge of letters, they certainly would not have had recourse to a means of perpetuating the memory of events, so much less perfect.

It was after the invention of the art of making paper, in the eleventh century, that writing came into general use, in the north of *Scotland*, even on important occasions: it was a corner peculiarly remote from the seats of learning, and in preceding ages, ill provided with the means of cultivating letters or diffusing knowledge; it is not therefore strange that the annals of this country, with respect to distant events, should be involved in a general obscurity.

THERE are writs extant, signed at *Inverness*, &c. in the middle of the eleventh century; though the obelisks under consideration must have been erected some time previous to that age; yet it is perhaps beyond human penetration any farther to ascertain the period, far less to unravel their import. One general observa-

ST. DUTHAC'S CHAPEL.

tion however occurs—that the genius, art, and application, discoverable in the carvings on these monuments ; the elegance of some of the ornaments, the mathematical accuracy of others, and elaborate execution of the whole ; as they bear testimony to the ingenuity and abilities of the artists of an unknown age ; so they are some acknowledgment of the tranquillity, improvements, and happiness of this country, ages before our accounts of it commence. The ornamental arts are only practised and admired, when leisure, quiet, and security is much enjoyed ; and they must have been greatly encouraged and delighted in, before they could have come to such perfection. Had the *Caledonians* been earlier capable of recording their story, it is probable we should have been presented with many pictures of easy life, of rural happiness and peaceful years ; perhaps of civil policy and superior improvements, enjoyed by the inhabitants of these northern provinces, previous to those turbulent ages, to which our histories extend.

THE numerous remains of antient towers and castles, both inland and upon the shores ; the decayed monasteries, and other religious buildings, all give evidence that *Ross shore* has been long held a field of valuable settlements : and now the whole ride round its eastmost extremity is through well-cultivated fields, and commonly very pleasant seats in view.

NEAR to *Tain* stand the walls of the chapel of St. *Duthac*, or St. *Duffus*, who died in 1249 bishop of *Ross*, and for his great piety was enrolled among the saints *. It was destroyed in the

* *Keith's Bishops of Scotl.* 110.

year 1427 *. An inveterate enmity had taken place between a laird of *Freswick* and a *M'Kay* of *Creigh*: *Freswick* was attacked, pursued, and fled to the chapel, then a noted sanctuary; but his implacable enemy set fire to the building, and *Freswick* perished in the flames.

A COLLEGIATE church was founded at *Tain*, by *Thomas* bishop of *Ross*, in the year 1481, for a dean, eleven prebendaries, and three singing-boys †. The whole building is still pretty entire, particularly the east window, which is a very sumptuous and beautiful specimen of the gothic style, prevalent in that age.

ST. BAR, bishop of *Caithness*, erected a place of worship at *Dornoch*, in the eleventh century: there also Sir *Patrick Murray* founded a monastery of *Trinity* friars, in the year 1271: and soon after, *Gilbert Murray*, bishop of *Caithness*, built a church, the cathedral of his diocese; and its remains shew, that the building has had a magnificence corresponding with the intent: it suffered a similar fate with the chapel of St. *Duffus*, but in a more memorable feud.

AN earl of *Caithness* had contrived to cut off the family of *Sutherland*, in order to invade their possessions; a boy, the heir, was preserved alive; and, to give his designs a fair and generous appearance, the earl of *Caithness* took the youth under his protection, and managed his estate for him. The *Murrays*, who were the most powerful chieftains of *Sutherland*, did not relish their lord's being under the tuition of the earl of *Caithness*; and therefore consulted and accomplished his removal, declaring at

* Conflicts of the Clans, 12.

† *Keith's Account of Religious houses.*

the same time, that they would no more pay allegiance to the earl of *Caithness* as protector of *Sutherland*; and dreading his resentment, strengthened themselves in the town and castle of *Dornoch*. The earl of *Caithness* sent his son, at the head of a large body of men, to reduce them to obedience by force of arms, and *Dornoch* was besieged; the *Murrays* defended it for several days with great resolution: but the opposite party having penetrated into the skirts of the town, with horrid policy set it on fire; the cathedral caught the flames, and shared the general ruin *.

IN bishop *Murray's* time, about the year 1260, the *Danes* made a descent on this coast, but were routed and drove to their vessels; a brother of the bishop's however fell in the fight, and is said to have been laid in a stone coffin above ground, near the font, in the east aisle of the cathedral; in the place I found buried, in the loose earth, a well-cut figure of a warrior, perhaps representing the general, and had been placed on the lid of the coffin, as was customary at the time. The monument without the town, called *Thanes-cross*, is commonly said to have been erected in memory of the above victory; but it is essentially different from any obelisk that has been said to have reference to such events.

IT is also of a kind distinct from those at *Aberlemni*, or on *Tarbetness*; it has none of the splendid enrichments wherewith they are distinguished. A large circle at the top is perforated, forming a cross within: the pillar plain; only in a frame on one

* *Conflicts of the Clans*, 32.

T H A N E S - C R O S S .

71

side is carved the *Sutherland* arms, on the other the armorial en-
signs of *Caithness*. Thence I should imagine it had been erected
to settle some boundary, or in memory of some alliance formed
between the earls of these contending counties. It perhaps may
give some validity to the conjecture, when one reflects that
other monuments were raised with similar intent, about that
æra, and the practice might not be uncommon. *Kings-cross*,
raised in *Stanmore*, on the borders of *Cumberland*, had on one
side the arms of *William* of *England*, on the other *Malcolm's* III.
of *Scotland*; and was erected as the boundary of their kingdoms,
on the conclusion of the treaty of peace, which they entered into
in the end of the eleventh century *.

* *Buchan*. lib. vii. Life of *Malcolm* III.

LETTER

L E T T E R XIII.

Helmisdale, June 15th.

THE family of *Sutherland* had a chapel of ease at *Golspie*, dedicated to St. *Andrew*; near the place where it stood, a curious obelisk is lying on the ground; the figures on it very distinctly marked; but in a ruder style than those on the monuments mentioned in my last. Immediately under the wild ornaments that generally finish them above, there is an uncouth figure, of a large elephant-like animal. This hieroglyphic has had some favourite allusion: it makes a distinguished appearance on several of these stones. On that at *Golspie*, it stretches over a man with a cross in one hand and a knife in the other, where-with he seems to attack an animal of the bear-kind: the knife, however, points also to the head of a fish resembling a salmon: its introduction may, perhaps, imply the early importance in which the capture of them was held. Two circles, sceptres, and other emblems, something similar to those on the stones at *Aberlemni*, will, I suspect, remain inexplicable. I forgot, however, to mention, that on the beautiful fragments on *Tarbetness*, some of these circles are serpents with two heads meeting, their tails convolved, and including several circular ornaments; and may have had reference to a well-known emblem of eternity; and in that way expressed the lasting fame of the hero in whose memory the monument was raised.

THE

THE limestone quarry above *Brora* is an interesting fund of speculation: the variety of shells contained in the heart of the stone is equally surprising and beautiful; many of them very different in form from any now found on these shores. Often the rock, when broken to pieces, allows the shells to fall out entire, retaining fine impressions of their shapes: many precipices on the banks of the river *Brora* are also full of shells.

“ * THE arable part of *Sutherland*, along the coast, is very narrow, confined by lofty black mountains,” which rise almost directly from the shore, and seem to exclude all access into the interior country. In consequence of your commands, I was not a little desirous of knowing what scenery might be found within the first range of mountains; and was fortunate enough to meet with a gentleman at *Kintradwel*, who in the pursuit of deer had been frequently led far among the inland rocks and forests, and offered to accompany me a day or two's journey into these wilds; and I shall not regret the toil, if the account of our discovery of some most ancient buildings prove interesting enough to yield you any entertainment.

WE had advanced several miles, through the most rugged paths imaginable, along the rocky and wooded sides of the river *Brora*, when I was struck with admiration by the noble appearance of the ruins of a large circular tower, placed on an adjacent eminence at *Achir na Kyle*. This I soon discovered to be a very perfect specimen of the architecture I was in search of. It is situated with

• Tour in *Scotl.* 69.

peculiar taste on the top of a lofty rock, opposite to some pleasant woods, and near excellent pasture; and round the precipice which overhangs the *Brora*, the river tumbles over its rocky channel in a number of irregular cascades. This building would have doubtless merited a very particular description, had it not corresponded with your account of those in *Glen-elg*. I must except the apartments within the walls, which are of an oval form, distinct and entire; about eight feet long, six high, and four wide; those on the ground-floor are still a place of refuge from the storm, for the goats that feed on the neighbouring hills; it would also seem, from their being so free of rubbish, that it has from time to time been cleared away, by those who take care of the goats and other cattle in those parts. The stairs of communication, from the first to the second row of chambers, are regular and commodiously made out: the apartments are carefully lighted by windows from within; a strong evidence, that the area within these towers had never been closed above, nor entirely covered. The door looks over the precipice towards the river, and is full six feet high, as I should suppose all of the kind have been, ere they were choaked up by the ruins of the building. One chamber had several paces of a level entry to it, and measured nine feet in height; this has been probably intended for the chieftain and head of the family who resided in the tower. The whole structure seems to me so well contrived, that it is not easy to conceive in what manner a people who could not work in wood or iron, could have been more conveniently accommodated in places of defence. The space for the hall in this, is about twenty feet diameter.

diameter. From the quantity of ruins, this castle must have been pretty high, probably so as to admit of a third row of chambers; the walls at present do not exceed fifteen feet. In these parts, this building is not singular: they have been very numerous among these hills. Wherever good pasture is found, near the less rugged forests, there one meets with the remains of a circular tower.

I saw two others, fallen into a shapeless state; and had particular information of one more complete than any that I had seen; but by every account, the unfrequented paths to it, amidst the dreary recesses of these mountains, were too horrible to be tried. This short excursion has thoroughly convinced me, that these structures have been all originally built on the same plan, and have been the residence of the chief families of a hardy race, in a very early age. Near the towers are commonly several *carns*, not monuments of the deceased, but a species of strong holds, which have one or two oval apartments within, (resembling the chambers in the walls of the castles) and a vast heap of stones placed above to render them impregnable: these have probably been the retreats, in time of danger, of the vassals of those chiefs, who were the proprietors of the adjacent towers. A little herdsman led the way, and I went into one of them, through a long narrow passage in the side of the carn; he also went into a dark under-ground hole which opened in the face of a green bank, where I did not chuse to follow him; but he said there was a similar chamber within, where half a

* Tour in Scotl. 1769.

LOCH-BRORA. CRAG-CARRIL.

dozen of men might sleep. These may have been places of refuge for the lowest of the people in times of feud and rapine; their ordinary dwellings having been reared of such slight materials, as could not have, till now, withstood the ravages of time.

BUT there may be others much larger and more elegant; furnished with numbers of lodges in the thickness of the walls. It is needless to add any thing concerning them, as you have given such ample accounts of them from the authority of Mr. *Pope**, illustrated with engravings from his designs. Their real use is also confirmed by the hand-mills, and heaps of bones of deer discovered in them; which prove them to have been the residence of chieftains, and not places of worship.

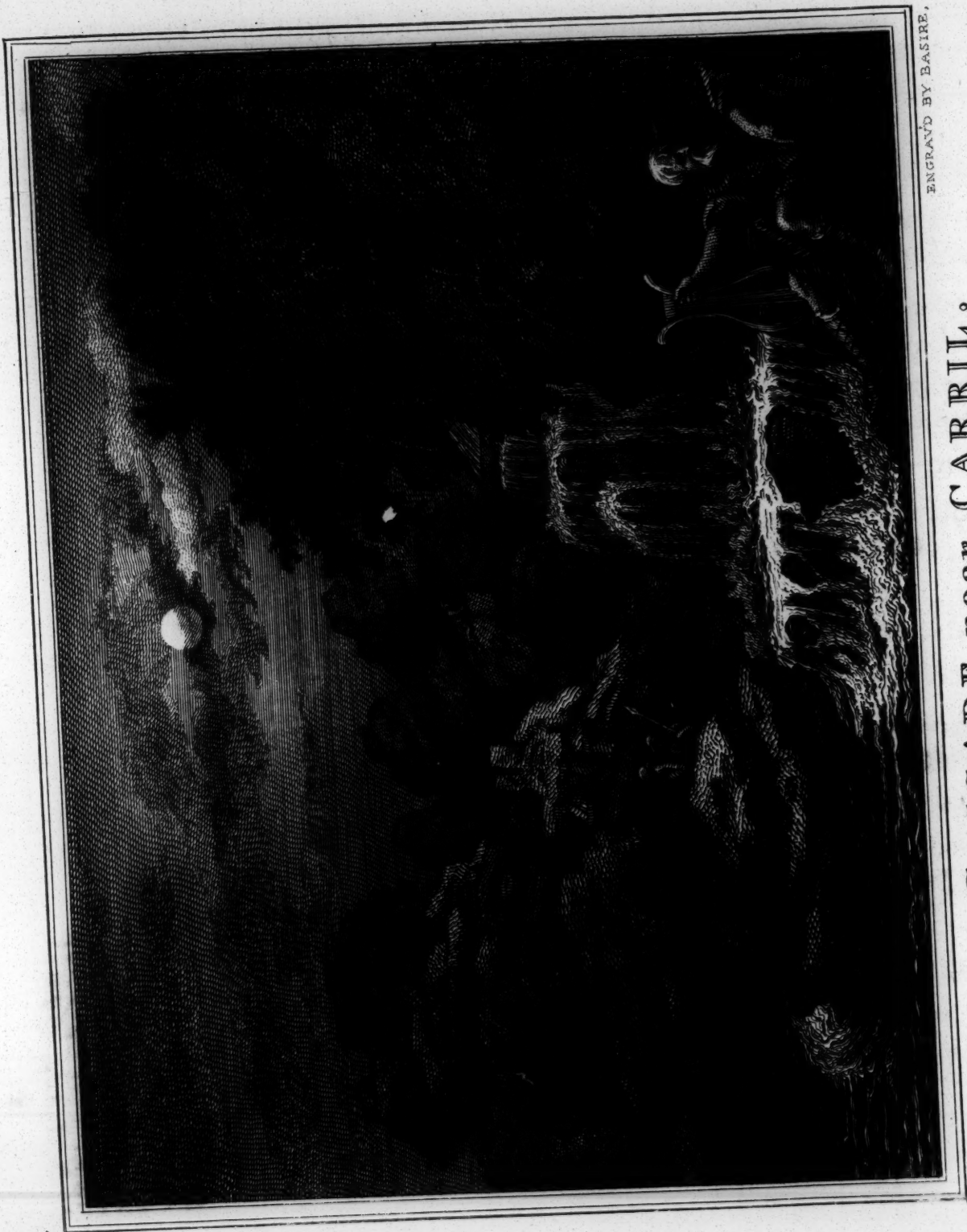
THE prospect beyond our route was of mountains, bleak, rocky, and desolate, exhibiting the forbidding aspect of incorrigible sterility.

LOCH BRORA is a fine sheet of water formed by the spreading of the river, in the bottom of a rich valley: it holds an extensive mirror to *Crag-Carril*, the rocky face of a very lofty mountain, which overhangs the loch: *Crag-Carril* bears vestiges of having been fortified round the top; has been long famed as the residence of eagles; but seems the resort of birds of every kind. It presents to the opposite farm at *Kil-calum-kil*, a most picturesque and majestic scene.

NEAR to *Carril* are some charming fields, bounded by a craggy hill; from a cleft in the middle of the hill rushes forth a tor-

* Tour in Scotl. 1769, 336, 337. Tab. xlv. xlvii.





ENGRAVED BY BASIRE.

CASCADE near CARRIL.

rent, which passing under a natural bridge of rock, dashes down the precipice, and forms a wild and beautiful cascade in its fall: the noise of the torrent echoing in a lofty and deep cavern; the cavern shagged with shrubs and aged trees, among which the wild-fowl make their nests; the rivulet murmuring round insulated piles of rock; and the distant prospect of these halls and monuments of antient heroes, forcibly recall to mind the images of the *Offian* song. Here, perhaps, has *Carril*, whose name is still preserved in these scenes, mused his wild and desultory strains: here, "amidst the voices of rocks, and bright tumbling of waters, he might pour the sound of his trembling harp *."—Whether the memory of lapsed ages was preserved by the bards, or if only, like a morning-dream, the visions of *Offian* came in later days, yet "pleasant are the words of the song;" well do they paint these wilds, in all the striking forms of their native grandeur and beauty. "Lovely are the tales of other times;" they are faithful to the story, which deceives the winter evening among the hills. "O *Carril*, raise again thy voice; let me hear the song of *Selma*, which was sung in the halls of joy, when *Fingal*, king of shields, was there, and glowed at the deeds of his fathers †."

BUT the light and joy of the song are fled; the halls of the renowned are left desolate and solitary, amidst rocks that no more echo to the sound of the harp, amidst streams which murmur unheeded and unknown.

* *Temora*, Book vi.

† *Fingal*, Book iii.

L E T T E R XIV.

Rater, June 20th.

ON visiting the shore at *Helmisdale*, was much disappointed to find the sea so rough, that it was impracticable to get round the promontory in a boat, for these prodigious cliffs would doubtless have presented some noble scenery. I was in some degree recompensed by a heavy fall of rain; it made the mountains afford some prospects extravagantly grand and new. In many places, where no streams had been before perceptible, there were now a number of torrents, which poured from the higher grounds, and rushing down the steeps, through rugged channels worn by former floods, made a variety of vast impetuous cascades, superior in height, and foaming with a wildness of beauty, perhaps, beyond any that are perpetual. On the top of the *Ord*, saw one peculiarly striking. A number of streams coming down from the higher parts of that vast ridge of mountains, gathered into one channel, and formed a considerable body of water; this new-created river, hurling along with immense rapidity, directed its course over one of the highest precipices, and was thrown a great distance, without farther interruption, into the sea. The cliff from which it fell was not less than a hundred fathom high. The torrent seemed like a white bending column, but in perpetual agitation; and round its base the foam and spray rose to a great height: a small vessel might have failed betwixt it and the rocks.

THE



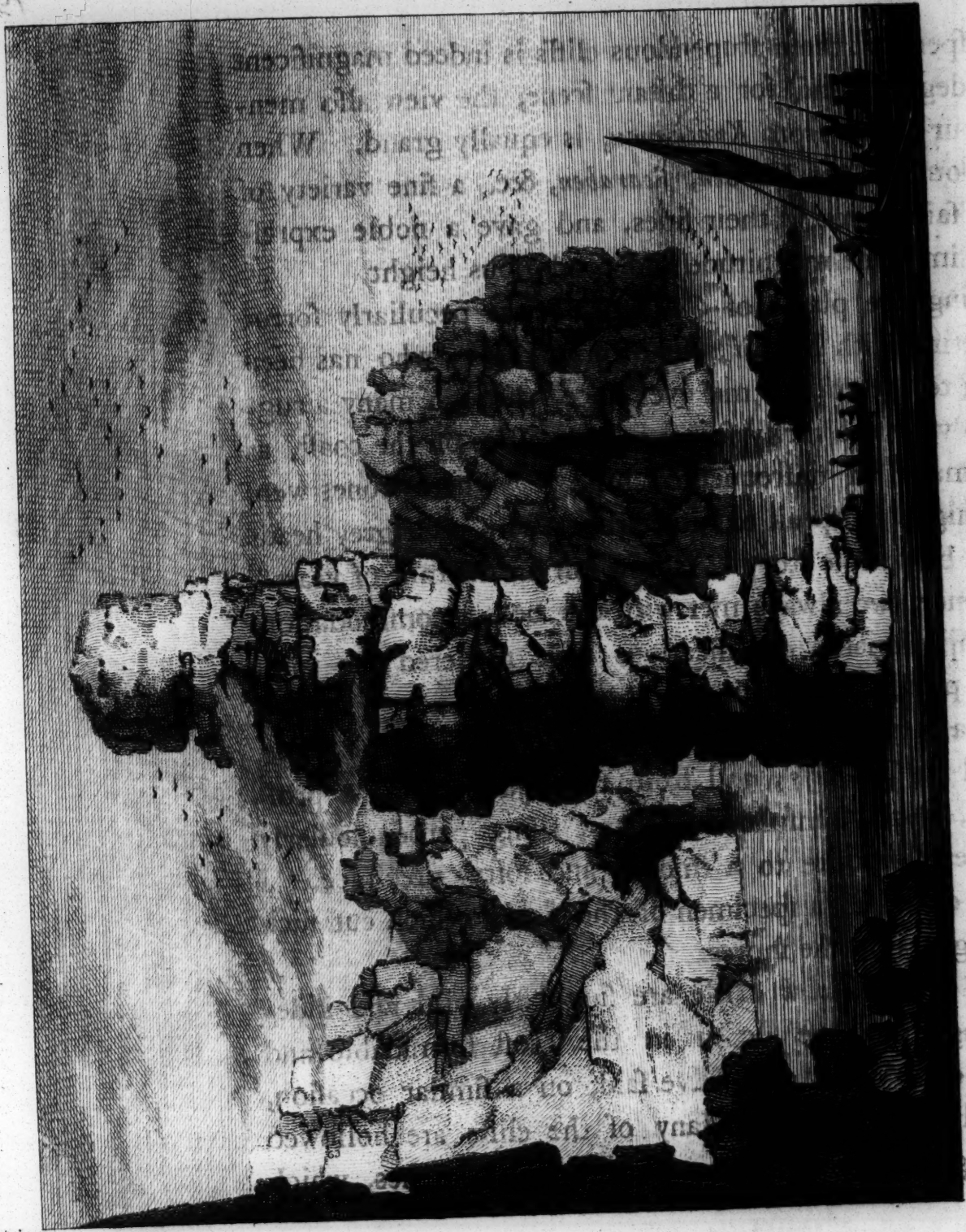


P. Mordell sculp.

C. Cordier pinx.

MORVERN & SCURABEN.





COLUMN on the Coast of CAITHNESS.

THE prospect of these stupendous cliffs is indeed magnificent to the last degree; and for a distant scene, the view also mentioned in your Tour, from *Knaekanan*, is equally grand. When I saw the mountains of *Morven*, *Scaraben*, &c. a fine variety of clouds were sailing round their sides, and gave a noble expression of their immense magnitude and prodigious height.

ON entering the plains of *Caitbnefs*, I was peculiarly fortunate in meeting with Mr. *Sinclair* of *Scots-culder*, who has been kind enough to accompany me ever since, through many a rugged way, to view the rocky scenery, and castles on the coast, as well as to many an unfrequented hill; “* where stones were raised on high, to speak to future times with their grey heads of moss;” but whose story “is now lost in the mist of years.” By his influence, we always met with the best accommodation, and his companionable qualifications have rendered the jaunt through this province exceedingly more amusing.

THERE is a very romantic fall of a rivulet, among the rocks, near the coast at *Clytbnefs*; and from the adjacent cliff, a prospect of a tall, shapely, insulated column, rising perpendicularly out of the sea, opposite to a smooth and lofty precipice. I send a sketch of it, as a specimen of the *stacks*, which cut such remarkable figures on the shores.

THE rocks near *Oldwick* castle are singularly wild and hideous, projecting into the ocean in the most formidable and gigantic shapes. What you have said, on a similar occasion, is justly applicable here: “Many of the cliffs are hollowed quite through, so as to form most magnificent arches, which

* *Temora*, Book viii.

“ the sea rushes through with vast noise and impetuosity, affording the most august pieces of scenery.”

OLDWICK CASTLE is a curious tower, and must be a building of great antiquity. It seems to be but a small improvement of the circular structures * mentioned in my last: it is built with cement, and is square; in all other respects it resembles them, and is evidently built after their model. There are small chambers within the body of the wall, which is therefore enormously thick, and narrow stairs of communication between the upper and lower apartments: these open into the hall or area of the tower, in which there is no vestige of there having been any division. The outside of the building scarcely shews any thing like windows, only a few small square openings, which seem to have been left for observation.

THE higher parts of the wall are composed of thin, flat, dry stones, which have been connected with little or no mortar. This castle seems, therefore, a specimen of one of the first attempts of the inhabitants, to build new fortresses, after gaining the use of iron tools, and becoming acquainted with the application of cement; both which, the circular towers in the wilds of *Sutherland* give evidence, were utterly unknown to their builders.

THROUGH the most inland parts of *Caithness*, as well as along the coast, many remains of the round towers are yet to be seen, and some of the chambers in them accessible: but none in any degree so entire as those among the *Sutherland* mountains. Here the access to them is easier, and the well-chosen stones

* In the running-title, p. 74, read circular tower.



OLDWICK CASTLE.



have from time to time been carried away, so that they are in general reduced to formless quarries.

I RECOLLECT to have observed, that Dr. *McPherson*, in his *Antiquities of Scotland*, says, "It would not be easy to prove, that the *Caledonians*, *Picts*, or antient *Scots*, had stone buildings of any kind*." I cannot well subscribe to this: yet must attribute them to another people, the *Danes*, who invaded *Scotland* about 860. No wonder, that now the ruins of such uncemented piles should be for the most part but a shapeless heap: — the greater wonder is, that there should be remains of them at all. The æra when they were inhabited, cannot be placed at less than six or seven hundred years distance; for the *Danes* evacuated the main land of *Scotland* in the beginning of the eleventh century: yet I believe they were, for some time after their retreat, possessed by the chieftains of the country. It is probable they went into disuse when the inhabitants of the north of *Scotland* learned to work in wood and iron. But the spacious remains of several of these strong towers, are expressive monuments of power vested in chieftains and heroes; and of subordination and discipline among their vassals, at early periods.

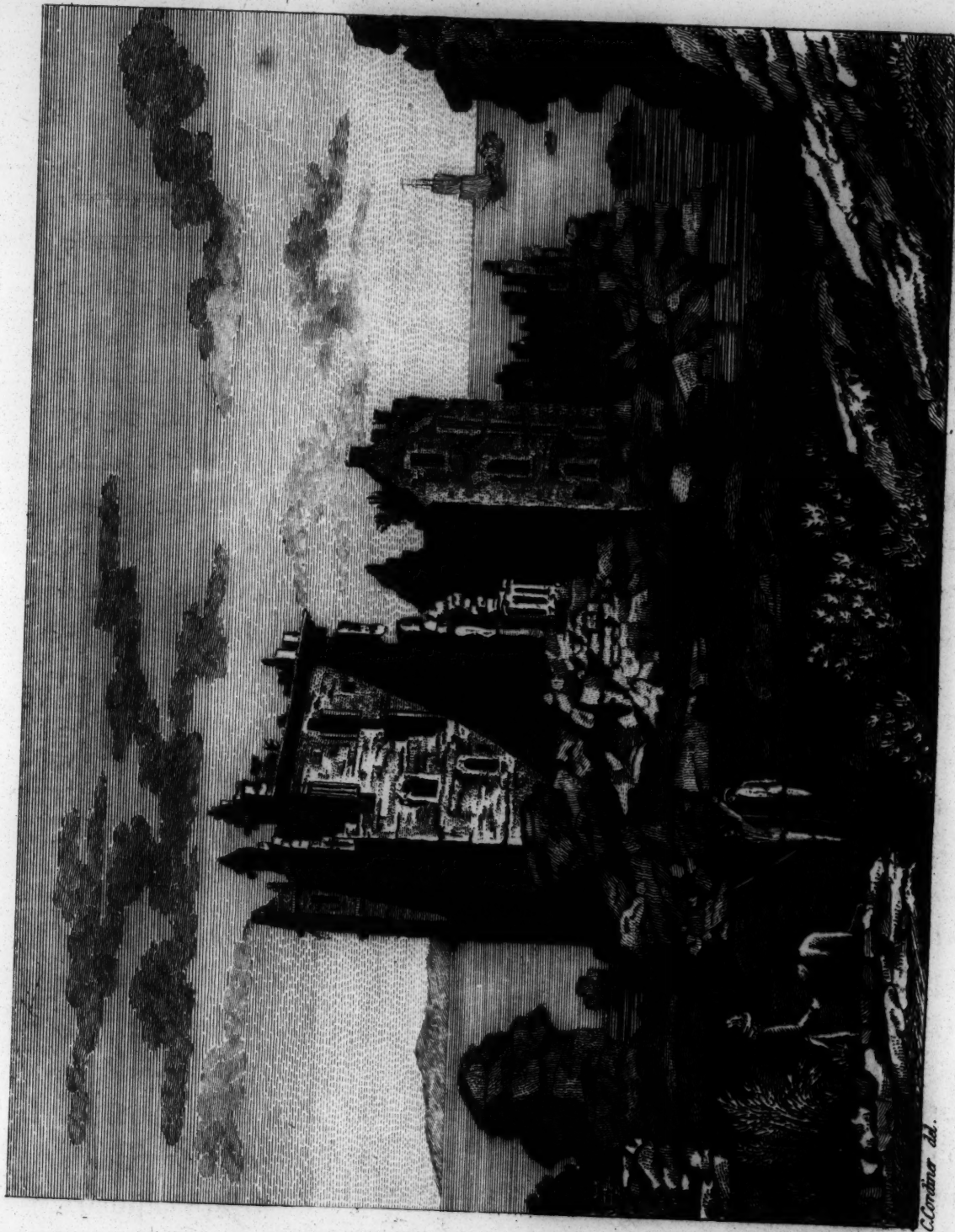
ONE is much disposed to think of the "feast of shells," in these halls of antient heroes; and to ruminate on all those circumstances, with respect to them, so particularly celebrated by the son of *Fingal*. But how shall we reconcile opposing testimonies? the heroes appear in burnished armour, and "steel min-

* P. 320 of that admirable performance.

“gles with steel,” at a time when a hammer was not lifted, nor a trowel used in the palaces of their princes.

BRAAL-CASTLE is a very antient structure, built a good deal in the style of *Oldwick*; but with several improvements; the chambers in the wall, are faced with square stones thoroughly smoothed; and a bench is raised all round for sitting on, except where the apartments communicate with the hall; and each chamber has a window looking into the fields. The stair-cases are more spacious, and the whole building thoroughly cemented. *Braal* I should apprehend to be much older than *Freswick* castle; and the style of building these fortresses, would every age receive improvement, until the last century, when *Guernigo*, *Sinclair*, and *Akirgal* castles were built, which are palaces when compared with *Oldwick*, *Braal*, or *Dilred*. Places of strength and defence are now no longer of any moment; lightness and elegance, as in other parts of the kingdom, are become the characteristics of the principal dwellings.

THE country round *Braal* is fertile and pleasant: some aged trees spreading near the castle, have the richer effect, on account of the uniform barrenness of the neighbouring grounds. The tower stands on an eminence; the river *Thurso* runs by, and yields plenty of salmon. A large plot of garden-ground is enclosed with high walls; some walks in it are well laid out, amidst rows of fruit-trees, bearing plenty of apples, pears, and cherries. This, in the twelfth century, was occasionally the residence of the earls of *Caithness*; the bishop had a dwelling near. *Braal* is situated four or five miles up from *Thurso*, beyond are rough morassy commons, which frequently vary into very stony ground;



SINCLAIR & GUERNIGO CASTLES.

*P. Marshall sc.**C. G. Contar del.*

DILRED CASTLE.

ground ; sometimes the stratum of rock entirely destitute of soil : thence very tedious paths winding through the heath, to avoid the boggy grounds, and rougher parts of the hills ; for near to *Dilred-castle*, which is twelve or fifteen miles from the coast, the country becomes mountainous.

DILRED has a most remarkable situation : built upon the top of a steep circular rock, rising almost perpendicularly out of the banks of the *Thurso*, and overhanging its craggy channel, there is on no side access to it, but by climbing ; some steps seem to have been fashioned up the one side of the rock ; but they are too ill executed, to yield any thing but a dangerous path : opposite to it are several exceedingly picturesque and rugged cliffs, which bound the course of the river to a considerable distance on either hand. On the top of an adjacent precipice is an enclosed burying-ground, with a number of moss-grown grave-stones in it.

IN the more champaign part of *Caithness*, the beauty of the farms is remarkable ; many of the corn-fields of great extent, shewing a rich uninterrupted verdure, for several miles together.

THE environs of a fine lake near to *Watten*, were peculiarly pleasant. Two miles from *Watten* down towards the coast, in the midst of a marshy heath, there is a very compleat circular fort, it seems almost entire, being raised of earth and turf, without any stones in it, there has been no temptation to destroy it. This *moat* consists of two thick and well-raised ramparts, drawn in a perfect circle, the one within the other, and between them a wide trench, very deep and full of water. Although the ditch is a good deal choaked up, with the grass and

rushes of many years, yet it is still impassable but at the proper gateway, where a mound of earth forms a bridge. The outer rampart is two hundred yards in circumference. The rampart within the trench incloses an area of five-and-twenty yards diameter. This may have been a temporary fortress, raised by the *Norse* invaders, in some of their depredations: and a place to secure the spoil, until they found leisure to convey it to their vessels; for even in early ages, the strong holds of the inhabitants, as is evident from their remains, were built with stones. And that these *moats* were courts of justice, as often the *druidical* circles were, is not very probable, as it is not easy to conceive on what account they would, in that case, have been so formidably fenced.

ROUND the foot of the outward rampart of the above, there is a regular hedge of scraggy trees and bushes; but the planting of that seems to have been of a more modern date; perhaps the work of some one who had more than common veneration for antiquity, either to ornament the ground, or prevent cattle from spoiling it.

THE rising grounds of the interior country, that are yet uncultivated, have many rude obelisks standing on them. On one hill, not many miles from the shore, observed a very singular collection, all well-shaped, thick flag-stones, standing erect, and from four to six feet high: these are disposed in regular rows, six feet distant; there are twenty rows, and twenty stones in each, so that there are no less than four hundred in that one spot. It is said to have been a field of battle—the stones, the number of the warriors slain. Such traditions are unsatisfactory. If it has

at all been a burying-ground, they have been exceedingly attentive to the regularity and order of the monuments of the dead; while there are no distinguishing marks on any of the stones. They might however know any particular grave, by its number in the lines. The place is called by the apposite name of the "*Hill of many stones.*"

ALONG the north shore, it is a delightful ride, from *John-a-Grot's* (*Dungby-head*) to this place, through fields whose smoothness and vivid verdure express a luxuriant soil, and elaborate cultivation. The *Orcades* spreading along the horizon, yield a charming prospect: some of the islands so near, as distinctly to exhibit the rocky fronts of these bold promontories, which sustain the weight of the vast currents from the *Atlantic*; others more faint; their distances finely expressed, as they retire from the eye, until the mountains of the more remote shew scarcely a deeper azure than the sky, and are hardly discernible rising over the surface of the ocean.

My writing from the present seat of the earl of *Caithness*, forcibly recalls to mind the story of those who in early ages laid claim to that title, and contended in arms for its emoluments and honours. The scenes of their naval conflicts are in view; their fields of battle are spoken of all around, and, awakening the memory of former transactions, give them a peculiar relish and importance. All the great events of this country are recorded by *Thormodus Torfæus*, the learned *Icelander*, with peculiar spirit. I think myself obliged to you for Mr. *Pope's* translation of his history of the *Orknies*, from which I have extracted all which relates to the countries I have travelled; but
do

do assure you, the labour of this abridgment has cost me more pains than all the rest of my work. This historical account I beg leave to add, as a proper appendage to this book.—But, to continue my tour.

JUNE 23d, I went from *Rater* to *Thurso*. The road for several miles lies along a smooth extensive beach of sand, which seems to have gained upon the country; for in the midst of it there is a considerable mount, which on examination proved to be the remains of some farm-houses.

THE neighbouring fields are very level, and I observed the sand still floating with the wind towards them. It must soon destroy more arable land, if some expedient is not fallen on to stop its progress*.

THURSO

* “ I have more than once, on the eastern coasts of *Scotland*, observed the
 “ calamitous state of several extensive tracts, formerly in a most flourishing
 “ condition, at present covered with sands, unstable as those of the deserts of
 “ *Arabia*. The parish of *Furvie*, in the county of *Aberdeen*, is now reduced to
 “ two farms, and above £. 500 a year lost to the *Errol* family, as appears by the
 “ oath of the factor in 1600, made before the court of session, to ascertain the
 “ minister’s salary. Not a vestige is to be seen of any buildings, unless a frag-
 “ ment of the church.

“ The estate of *Coubin*, near *Forres*, is another melancholy instance. This
 “ tract was once worth £. 300 a year, at this time overwhelmed with sand.
 “ This strange inundation was still in motion in 1769, chiefly when a strong
 “ wind prevailed. Its motion is so rapid, that I have been assured, that an
 “ apple-tree has been so covered with it in one season, that only the very
 “ summit appeared. This distress was brought on about ninety years ago, and
 “ was occasioned by the cutting down some trees, and pulling up the Bent or Star
 “ which

THURSO is situated at the bottom of a spacious bay of that name, covered on the north-east by *Dunnet-head*, and bounded on the west by another very bold promontory. It is a very ca-

“ which grew on the sand-hills; which at last gave rise to the act of 15 George II. c. 33. to prohibit the destruction of this useful plant.

“ I beg leave to suggest to the public a possible means of putting a stop to these destructive ravages. Providence hath kindly formed this plant to grow only in pure sand. Mankind was left to make, in after-times, an application of it suitable to their wants. The sand-hills, on a portion of the *Flintshire* shores, in the parish of *Llanasa*, are covered with it naturally, and kept firm in their place. The *Dutch* perhaps owe the existence, of part at least of their country, to the sowing of it on the *mobile solum*, their sand-banks.

“ My humane and amiable friend, the late *Benjamin Stillingfleet*, Esq; recommended the sowing of this plant on the sandy wilds of *Norfolk*, that its matted roots might prevent the deluges of sand which that county experiences. It has been already remarked, that wheresoever this plant grows, the salutary effects are soon observed to follow. A single plant will fix the sand, and gather it into a hillock; these hillocks, by the increase of vegetation, are formed into larger, till by degrees a barrier is made often against the encroachments of the sea; and might as often prove preventative of the calamity in question.

“ I cannot, therefore, but recommend the trial to the inhabitants of many parts of *North Britain*. The plant grows in most places near the sea, and is known to the highlanders by the name of *Murab*; to the *English* by that of *Bent-star*, *Mat-grass*, or *Marram*. *Linnaeus* calls it *Arundo arenaria*. The *Dutch* call it *Helm*.

“ This plant hath stiff and sharp-pointed leaves, growing like a rush, a foot and a half long: the roots both creep and penetrate deeply into their sandy beds: the stalk bears an ear five or six inches long, not unlike rye: the seeds are small, brown, and roundish. By good fortune, as old *Gerard* observes, no cattle will eat or touch this vegetable, allotted for other purposes, subservient to the use of mankind.”

T. P.

pacious,

THURSO: ITS TRADE, CHURCH, &c.

acious, and may in general be a pretty safe road; but when there are strong winds from the north-west, a very heavy sea must come ashore. The harbour is formed only by the sea's flowing into the channel of the river: the vessels lie-to for loading and unloading at its banks. Their trade chiefly arises from the export of corn, oatmeal, salmon, herrings, and other staple commodities of the country; and in bringing home such articles as are required by the inhabitants, for cloaths, building, luxuries: wood, iron, wines, salt, sugar, &c.

I WAS told, that in some years there is grain exported from *Caithness* to the extent of forty thousand bolls.

THE present church of *Thurso* was of old the bishop of *Caithness's* chapel. It is a large stately building, but not ornamental. The divisions of the gothic window are massy, not elegant; no way equal to the church at *Tain*. The castle in which the bishops resided, stood on a rocky mount a little west from the town. The remaining walls shew that it has been strongly built, and defensible. There seems to have been apartments in the thickness of the wall, something like those of *Braal* castle; but the whole is so entirely ruinous, as not to admit of a positive description.

THE head-land which stretches north into the sea from *Scrabster*, is full of horrid caverns; at a great distance from the precipices, there are gloomy openings in the green, like wells or pits; on approaching the verge of these, one hears the sea roaring at the bottom; and can sometimes observe the whiteness of the spray foaming beneath in the abysses.

SEVERAL

SEVERAL of these subterraneous vaults open to the sea, in noble caves, with lofty entrances. And a little way from the main-land cliffs, are some finely insulated columns, large towering masses of rock; in many places cleft, so that the sea-fowl find secure abodes in the dark recesses within.

ONE need not say that here at this season is a great length, but entire continuance of day. I have made the experiment at what is commonly termed midnight, and found there was no deficiency of light, to disable one from reading or writing with ease.

JUNE 24. Find that I shall be under the necessity of returning the horses by the east coast, to meet me at *Tain*, having formed the resolution of going round to *Rossshire*, through the most mountainous parts of *Strathnaver*. Large horses cannot take that route, not only on account of the exceeding roughness of the rocky heaths; the difficulty of the paths among hills, where climbing is often necessary, and the dangerous nature of the swamps and morassy grounds: but, as it is not practicable to carry corn and hay into the wilds; the finding of good grass being extremely precarious, and provender of any kind very difficult to be obtained; all they who wish to penetrate into the more remote and desert districts of *Strathnaver*, must be furnished with the hardy ponies of the country; a breed, I believe, originally from the *Orcades*. These being accustomed to climb among rocks; to jump between hillocks among bogs; to feed on birch-leaves, or any green stuff that grows among the hills, are the only proper horses for the journey. I was favoured with a

N

couple

couple of these, and guides who could speak both the *Erse* and *English* languages, by Mr. *Sinclair*, of *Scotscalders*.—Saw some planting rising round his seat, about five miles south-west from *Thurso*, and seemingly in a thriving way. There are some good trees in the gardens at *Westfield*, a seat within a few miles of the former. Capt. *Dunbar*, the proprietor of the last, has lately discovered some excellent marl, in the bottom of a loch on his estate: its good effects are already observable in the richness of the neighbouring farms, and in the luxuriance of his fields. The house of *Westfield* is a square tower, but a modern building. The rooms are large and elegant. The roof is flat, designed for walking on, and commands the prospect of a pleasant country.

JUNE 25th. Rode down to the coast at the kirk of *Rae*, had for several hours the pleasure of Mr. *Pope's* conversation, who has already made himself known to you, by his account of the antiquities, and other things remarkable in these counties *. I received much instruction and entertainment from his free communication of whatever farther occurred on these subjects, or had reference to the objects of my jaunt, and shall as I pass along use his observations, to correct or enlarge my own.

WE saw a farmer sowing; it appeared to me a very late seed-time, but he said he was as early as usual, and would lay a bet to have harvest as soon as any in *Scotland*. The soil of that lot

* See *Tour in Scotl.* 1779. 336.

SANSIDE: IMPROVEMENTS THERE.

91

of ground indeed was peculiarly warm, sandy, and dry : but the grain in the neighbourhood is seldom much above six weeks in the ground, until the crop is ready for being reaped *.

A SHORT walk led to *Sanfide*, a spacious seat, placed on a rocky mount, which however the proprietor is with infinite labour levelling at top. The situation has been the choice of a former age : it is surrounded with a soil naturally barren ; its ruggedness is however fast giving place to the improvements of agriculture and art.

Mr. *Innes* is every day making the face of his lands put on a more polished appearance. His parks of sown grass, (a circumstance new in this country) yield quantities of the finest hay : and myriads of firs are rising in inclosures of great extent.

THE coast here is formed into small bays, corresponding with the openings of the dales or vallies, which run up between the ridges of the hills ; these have generally a pretty level beach, interspersed with few rocks, and composed of pebbles, shells, and sand. But where the intermediate mountains stretch into the ocean, their fronts are immensely bold, lofty, and rugged ; often shattered into the strangest piles : some of these assume the appearance of huge pyramids placed on the shore, others rising perpendicularly from the ocean, and entirely separated, at various distances from the main, are diversified by the strangest variety of forms : here like irregular spires, and vast towering columns, with lesser obelisks by them : there of spacious front, and pro-

* The summer here is far shorter than that of *Siberia*, where the whole operation of ploughing, sowing, and reaping, is confined to fifty-nine days.

SCENERY. HOSPITALITY.

digious magnitude, clefted to a great height from the sea, so that in various directions they may be sailed through and through; and in the deep recesses of these enormous cells the sea-fowl remain unmolested and secure; even when the winter-storm makes the heaviest billows of the *Atlantic* roar around them. Some of the largest of these are covered with grass, and it has been in agitation to contrive a method of getting sheep or goats put upon them. That would make the prospect still more romantic. The precipices are in general animated with multitudes of coots, gulls, kittiwakes, &c. and the whole presents a field of the most noble and wildest scenery. I attempted to give an idea of some of these by drawings, but found my sketches very inadequate to express the grandeur of these enormous rocks.

THE hospitality of these coasts appears no less romantic than the scenery. The being a stranger, seems to be a title to every office of friendship, and to the most distinguished marks of attention and civility. Enter

S T R A T H N A V E R.

JUNE 26. Was accompanied by Mr. *McKay* of *Bigbouse*, and rode several miles over a very coarse heath, intersected with deep sloughs, which kept the horses perpetually jumping. These fields are often rocky, and seemingly too stubborn to be ever much reduced to human use. At noon we turned round a craggy hill, and came down into

STRATH-

STRATH-HALLAD-DALE,

and were soon in sight of Mr. *McKay's* seat, which formed a complete contrast to the rugged scenes on the way. It is situated at the mouth of a smooth flowing river, on a bank which commands an extensive prospect of the sea, and fronts one of the sweetest of those dales, that are the habitable parts of *Strathnaver*. It is a rich but narrow valley, which, for several miles, divides the mountains, and forms a winding plain on each side of the river. It produces fine natural grass, which grows sufficiently long to be cut for hay; and the soil is easily tilled. The improvements of agriculture are here much studied, and make considerable progress: but when the views of the proprietor extend beyond the dale, and he attempts to gain upon the hill, the soil is so perplexed with rocks, and interwoven roots of shrubs, that the expence of labour in reducing it, renders the purchase dear.

In the dale the climate seems sufficiently warm. The appearance of the gardens was unexpectedly pleasing. In a spot enclosed with such barren ridges of rocky hills, one does not look for such a display of luxuriance; the borders decked with variety of the richest flowers, plenty of wall-fruits; apples, pears, plums, cherries, which are often as early ripe as at *Edinburgh*; beds of melons and cucumbers; and whatever can give variety, or grace the entertainments of the table.

A FEW miles up the river, on the side of a hill, there are several carns, the supposed monuments of heroes who fell in battle: on one rising ground, observed a well-shaped taper monument, about

eight feet high ; on another, one in a form of a cross ; but no sculpture on either *.

FROM an adjacent hill, was presented with a view of the most mountainous parts of *Strathnaver*, regions that seemed to mingle with the clouds. The more immense and distant summits of the mountains rose from the horizon into the sky, like thin blue vapours, softened with shades, scarcely distinguishable from the azure of the firmament. The medium through which we see is blue. All objects partake of it, in proportion to their distance from the eye. When very remote, they seem entirely to lose their own natural colour, and put on the tinge of the pure æther. When mountains appear near to the tint of a cloudless sky, both their size and distance may be depended on to be great.

“ THE eye ranging over the plains of *Ægypt*, and catching
“ the blue point of a pyramid, from the colour concludes the
“ distance, and wonders at the greatness of the pile †.”

THE *Strathnaver* mountains, towards which I must now bend my way, are in gigantic forms, looking over the vast tract of intermediate country, with all that airy blueness, which can indicate them lofty and remote.

* Some miles distant there are similar appearances, on a rising ground near *Dale-Harold*, on the river *Naver*. There an extensive level moor is still called, in the *Erse* language, “ the Field of Blood : ” and the number of cairns and rude obelisks point it out to have been the scene of action that has terminated some violent feud, and where eminent persons had fallen.

† Essay on Prints.

STRANDED VESSEL. SCENERY.

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JUNE 27th. Proceed along the north coast, westward. From *Strath-ballad-dale*, the same rough roads continue. At the distance of six or eight miles, they lead down to

STRATHY - BAY.

THERE was a stranded vessel lying on the sands. She had been run ashore in a storm, and beat so far up, that she cannot be got afloat again. They have not timber to prepare a launch: but a number of men are employed in turning the course of a rivulet, that, forming its channel where the vessel lies, it may clear her way to the sea.

ABOUT four or five miles further west, another valley opens to the sea, called

ARMIS - DALE.

THIS is a dreary solitude, terminating in the wildest rocks upon the shore: its very bottom rugged, barren, altogether uninhabited. The scenery becomes more august and gloomy. The craggy brows of the hills frowning over the dale, make one tremble to enter it. The country, from the opposite height, puts on the most desolate and forlorn appearance. The wildness continually increasing, the paths become more rugged, every avenue among the hills, perplexed with ranges of immense stones, renders travelling extremely difficult. For several miles, the best road which the guides could take, was in the channel of a rivulet, and its bed was far from being smooth: nothing to be seen around but a wilderness of rocks. After struggling on for several miles, by following the course of the stream, we were led to

N A T U R A L A R C H .

to the shore, at a place where there was a small tract of green fields adjoining to some fishermen's houses. There seemed something very comfortable even in the look of these, after having wandered many hours in so dreary and unhospitable a desert. These I should suppose to have been the demesne, belonging to the adjacent castle of

B O O R V E .

THIS very antient fortress is situated on a lofty oblong rock rising out of deep water, and inaccessible on all sides but by a very narrow neck, which joins it to the precipices on the main. The cliffs are here about one hundred and fifty feet high: that, in particular, on which the castle is built. The area round the building is upwards of two hundred feet square. The vaulted passage, formed by nature, through and through the rock beneath, is well described by Mr. *Pope* *.

THIS tower is understood to have been once the residence of *Thorkel*, one of the famous buccaneers in the tenth century, mentioned by *Torfæus*; and (as will be observed when mentioning the conflicts of the clans) was besieged and destroyed by the earl of *Sutherland* in 1555.

THE coast is here disjoined into larger masses, forming a number of rocky islands, some of them of considerable extent,

* Through the rock upon which the tower stands, there is a passage below of two hundred feet in length, like a grand arch or vault, through which they row a boat. The passage is so long, that when you enter at one end, you fancy that there is no possibility to get out at the other, *et vice versa*: it is one of the most curious natural arches, perhaps, in the known world.

at

at various distances from the shore. From the promontory beyond the castle of *Boorve*, there is a most extensive view of these, all the way to the firth of *Tongue*.

THAT promontory covers, on the east, the bay of

F A R.

Several good houses with farm-lands lie along the sides of the bay; at the bottom of it stands the church, and near it there is a well-carved monument, with an ornamental cross upon it: and from the resemblance of the work, it is probably of a similar date with those at *Aberlemny* and on *Tarbet-ness*.

NEAR the church of *Far*, there is a very tolerable inn: our horses got provender, and there seemed no want of good accommodation.

THENCE we took an inland route, and it appeared that we went straight up into the country, although the intention was to keep along the north shore. Where there are no roads, one must make whatever sweeps the prudence of the guides think necessary, to avoid the swamps and marshes, or inaccessible parts of the mountains. In the course of this circle, we passed through a small but cultivated plain, in a kind of open country; a rivulet watered it, and its banks were enriched with hamlets and trees; but after a mile or two, on ascending the neighbouring heights, the wildest appearances of nature were renewed, and we had to struggle through the most uncomfortable wastes, regions full of large loose stones, among which it was often difficult to find soil enough to tread on.

O

IN

BEN-LUGAL. HIDEOUS VALLEY.

IN the evening we found our way along the beach of a lake, which, though stony, yielded a smoother and more pleasant path than any that was to be found amid the rocky hills by which it was bounded. A number of tufted islands enriched the surface of the large expanse of water, and it held a mirror to the lofty mountain of *Ben-lugal*, which made a majestic and picturesque back-ground to the scene. On quitting the lake, we turned north again down to the coast, through rocks strowed over a narrow, deep, and gloomy valley. The mountainous ridge by which it was bounded on the west, terminated perpendicularly in precipices of enormous height. The craggy front projecting over the declivity, had rolled vast rocks into the bottom of the vale, which greatly obstructed our way; and other immense masses, seemingly loose, hanging on high, and threatening to tumble, every moment, down, made the passage round it hideous. But on gaining the opposite side of the mountain, a more pleasant prospect opened: cultivated grounds appeared.

T O N G U E,

the seat of lord *Reay*, discoverable amidst groups of well-grown trees; ranges of others inclosing gardens; a church and village; with fields of fresh verdure, stretching down to the banks of the firth; all conspired to form a chearful and refreshing scene.

SEVERAL islands rise in the mouth of the firth of *Tongue*, and some of them are of considerable extent; but not inhabited; one or two of them are a kind of warrens, others yield variety of game.

NEAR

TOWN OVERWHELMED IN SAND.

99

NEAR the shore, on the levellest bank of the firth, there formerly was a sea-port town, the public mart of *Strathnaver*. The firth, indeed, within the islands, forms a charming harbour. It had almost ceased to be remembered, that there ever was a town there. But on the 27th of *July 1751*, a very heavy cloud of rain fell on the adjacent mountains: the showers were peculiarly violent, and their force impetuous; these congregated waters rushing in a thousand torrents down the hills, assembled in the deep-worn channel of the dale, and foaming through with their whole united force, exerted it in sweeping an extensive bank of sand to the sea. On its removal, the ruins of the town were discovered; whole ranges of buildings appeared, which had lain from time immemorial beneath the sand: an additional proof of the devastations occasioned by that dangerous and fluctuating soil.

In these parts, commonly called lord *Reay's* country, there are several rivers that yield salmon. About fourteen men are employed on the *Naver*, and they catch seventy or eighty barrels in a season. *Hope*, *Durness*, *Layford*, are but small rivers, and altogether do not yield more fish than the *Naver* does alone. These salmon are sent round to *Findhorn* in boats that carry casks for them, and are thence shipped to the proper markets, along with what are caught on the coasts of *Moray*, &c.

THERE are about eighty tons of kelp made annually on this coast. Leaving *Tongue*, passed by an old square tower, called *Bar-castle*, or *Castle-varrich*, placed on a rugged mount, commanding a full view of the firth all the way down to the sea, and rested, for the night, in

ENCHANTING SCENERY.

R I B B Y - D A L E,

a romantic open valley, bounded by rugged and lofty mountains: a large rivulet pours its clear current in serpentine windings through the dale, here and there overshadowed with trees of various size: all around, the eye is presented with objects most majestically wild: on one hand, the shelvy heaths, which stretch up into the mountain *Ben-hope*; on the other, the dark hill and huge precipices which rise beyond *Tongue*. On the north, a very rocky ascent to the craggy eminence where *Bar-castle* stands; but on the south, in most distinguished magnificence, is reared the lofty mountain of *Ben-lugal*. It rises immediately from the dale, to a prodigious and precipitous height: its bold front, towering almost to the zenith of the sky, is lost in clouds and mist; and seems to consist of regions void of vegetation: immense masses of rock, formed into cliffs of various form, interwrought with trees and shrubs, and scattered pieces of verdure, next strike the view; irregular belts of wood, strewed along the declivities from where the precipices end, constitute the girdle of its enormous base, which, stretching down amid the softer beauties of the dale, makes a very grand and pleasant landscape.

HAD one only to admire this so various and noble scenery, and not travel through the horrid paths, by which the exhibition is obtained; it would be extremely delightful.—They are alarming us with the difficulties of to-morrow's route; but the hope of seeing the celebrated *Dun of Dornadilla*, banishes every other care, and animates the thoughts of the journey.

JUNE

JOURNEY TO DORNADILLA.

101

JUNE 28. Having laid in provisions for the way, at *Ribbydale*, I set out early in the morning to be conducted to that famous tower.

I UNDERSTOOD, that the direct course thither lay between the mountains of *Ben-lugal* and *Ben-hope*; but the guides seemed convinced, that there the numberless pools; and mossy ground softened into bog by perpetual streams from the hills, formed such a labyrinth of sloughs, that they could not undertake to carry our little caravan safely through; and it was found necessary to have an additional guide, more particularly acquainted with the route we were to take. Our way was to be sought across the mountain of

B E N - H O P E.

Its top seems divided, and shows a hollow in the middle: through that distant valley were we to advance into the country beyond. The morning clouds were resting between the towering summits of the mountain, as in regions of superior tranquillity. When I first descried *Ben-hope*, and saw its shapeless head heaving into the horizon, and spreading like a vast vapour above, beyond the other hills, I could have formed no idea that I should be under any temptation of attempting to gain its summit; yet this now became not only expedient but necessary. We advanced from the dale directly in front of the mountain. For some time the ascent was perfectly easy; but the paths were to be sought (for scarce any two chose the same) amidst large masses of rock which projected from the soil; round stones, and hillocks covered with heath, filled the intermediate spaces.

DIFFICULT ASCENT OF

The ruggedness continued to increase as we approached the steeper parts of the mountain. The ponies wandered through with much seeming unconcern; but the danger of being thrown, on such road, was considerable. On showing an inclination to dismount, the guides told me, "that I had better keep on horseback while the ways were good, because by-and-by I should be under the necessity of walking." There was but little comfort in this admonition; however, I trusted that they were exaggerating, for it was not easy to conceive in what manner the face of the earth could be more horridly rugged. But ere we had advanced an hour, I found their observation had been pertinent and just; their declaration became perfectly realized; there remained no more possibility of riding.

THE vast chasms dug out by the winter torrents pouring down the steeps, were so frequent and irregular, that no art could avoid them: in many places, the soil was entirely washed away, and left the rocky mountain bare; in other places, it was stagnated in a soft and boggy state, where one might plunge to an immeasurable depth. Where the slope at any time was more level, and free of rock and bogs, the heath was rank and scraggy, and every part of the progress occasioned new fatigue. The ponies, left to themselves, followed us with great dexterity, and kept regular pace with us, whether we struggled through the brake, or had occasion to jump and climb.

SOMETIMES the ascents were so very steep, and the ground precipitous, that we were obliged to make large sweeps, by traversing, to gain upon the hills. This toil, however, was not altogether void of entertainment; here, picturesque and moss-

grown rocks over-hung our way; there, passed the yawning gloom of some horrid cavern; or, from the higher eminences, looked down on the surrounding world, astonished at the greatness of the scene. About noon we arrived at a level, where there was green herbs and coarse grass, and rested that the horses might feed. This place it seems is the usual stage, where the weary travellers between these distant dales refresh themselves with a portion of whatever provision their prudence has carried along: it is a flat plot in the bosom of the mountain, sheltered round, except where it opens to the south-east. The day was pretty calm and the sky clear; the air felt warm, though evidently purer. The superior distinctness of vision was exceedingly pleasant.

THE prospect of the northern ocean, interspersed with islands, and the prodigious cliffs that project along these bold and mountainous shores, so extensive from this high point of view, was elevating and grand. In one particular it very much surprized me. I had taken a sketch of the firth of *Tongue*, from *Bar-castle*, the preceding evening, and by that means had been particularly attentive to mark its effect, and now found, that after half a day's journey, the distance scarcely seemed any thing increased, nor any part of the prospect less distinctly marked. The outline of the buildings at *Tongue* was so accurately defined, I thought I could have run down to it in half an hour.

Soon as they thought the ponies sufficiently refreshed, we renewed our journey up the mountain, and got into the clouds, which were hovering round its top. At first the mist only obstructed our view, but felt chilly as we advanced. When we began

DREARY WILDERNESS.

began to open the horizon beyond, sudden gusts of wind came down between the cliffs into which the summit of the mountain is divided; and the clouds were tossed about in eddies by the squalls, until they fell in showers of mingled sleet and rain. It became intensely cold. The current of air, loaded with these embryo-snows, was extremely penetrating. We quickened our pace, to get beyond the highest part of our route, and soon found the difficulty of surmounting *Ben-hope* was over, and that we got into a milder climate again.

BUT a wide extent of desert country lay before us, and exhibited a most august picture of forlorn nature. The prospect was altogether immense, but wild and desolate beyond conception. The mountains presented nothing to view, but heath and rock; between them formless lakes and pools, dark with the shades thrown from prodigious precipices, gave grandeur to the wilderness in its most gloomy forms. The proceeding into this uncomfortable desert was not to be avoided.

THE declivity of the mountain for some time yielded pretty good footing. The sloping rocks were tolerably even, interspersed and connected with firm turf, and as the levellest ridges could be followed in an easy descent, we made a most expeditious journey down a great part of the way. But, too soon, we came to an end of that noble pavement. A dreary moor received us, in which none but the most wretched paths were to be found, and we got involved among swamps more formidable than the ruggedest of the hills. At times the surface bent and waved under our feet, while the pressure made the water from beneath spring up in small streams round every step. This progress was
attended





DUN DORNADILLA.

XIX.

105.

attended with the perpetual dread of sinking in the quagmire. One of the ponies plunged, and was with difficulty extricated. The banks of rushes were our greatest comforters ; their matted roots made the surface firm ; where they were distant, the passing over the morass became truly alarming. I thought we should have been swallowed up. Far beyond the sight of habitation, but those of eagles ; or of inhabitant, but wild-fowl ; and involved in these horrid swamps, I shuddered at the rash procedure ; even to see the halls of *Fingal*, or of higher chiefs than him ! nor knew the premium that would have made me return by the same way again.

AFTER about an hour we got through the marsh, and advanced over a rising ground, which gave a firmer path ; and coming to the brow of a hill, which terminates the declivity of *Ben-hope*, and forms on this side the boundary of *Strathmore*—had the pleasure of looking down on

D U N - D O R N A D I L L A *,

and forgot the fatigues of the day. This venerable ruin dignifies the banks of a pleasant river, which divides the dale. The verdure of the valley, not without rising corn, became a cheering scene in so dreary a wilderness ; a solitary hamlet near the best-cultivated spot, mingled a rural softness with the vast wildness of the rest of the prospect. Projecting rocks, shagged with bushes, and frowning with vast length of shadows along

* One of my views of this tower is engraven in the 5th volume of the *Archæologia*, tab. XVIII.

INTENTION AND STRUCTURE

the sides of the hills of immeasurable extent, many cascades in deep-worn channels, rushing down among them, murmur their wild music to the winds and the echoing rocks; for now no plaintive bard sits listening "by the tree of the rustling leaf." Picturesque and lofty mountains terminate the view; the head of one immensely high in air, bending over its precipitous sides, seems nodding to its fall, and threatens the dale with its ruins. On every hand the scenery is such, as gives *Dun-Dornadilla* a situation distinguishedly romantic, magnificently wild.

FROM the anonymous account of the building, which is quoted in the *Voyage to the Hebrides*, I expected greater singularity in its structure; but it uniformly corresponds with what remains of the other circular towers, which have been the castles of the chieftains in early ages. It bears a most remarkable resemblance to those in *Glenelg*, of which you have given such accurate views, and so fully described in all its parts, as to render any further account almost unnecessary. I should not have said so much, if it was not to vindicate you from a most groundless charge in a late publication. The perusal of your description * will be sufficient evidence of my assertion.

I CANNOT see the smallest reason for supposing that such edifices have been places of worship. They are with the utmost ingenuity contrived to prove secure and convenient dwellings. The inner wall of each seems uniformly perpendicular, so that

* *Tour in Scotl.* 1772, Part I. 2d. edit. p. 390, 391, 392, 393—also p. 250, and 336, in which the various kinds are fully described.

in these towers there remain no vestiges of their having closed at the top, after the manner of the recesses in the carns. But it is probable they may have had partial coverings of wood; the circles of stones, which project in some of them, at an equal height, all round the inside of the building, may have been for resting the ends of the beams upon. It is not an invincible argument against it, that the builders do not seem to have had hammers, or known the use of iron; for we find, that not only beams and planks can be cut, but compactly and firmly joined; and even rich carvings executed, without the aid of instruments of metal: of this the late voyages in the *South Seas* yield the most striking evidence. But whatever floorings they may have had within the castles, they must not have extended over all the area of the building; for that would have rendered the halls dark and cheerless; and as the apartments in the walls and passages are at present, with evident design, lighted by windows from within; that would have been a superfluous care, if they had above entirely excluded the day*. Some of the square openings, indeed, in the inner wall, as is justly observed by the anonymous writer, do not communicate either with the chambers or passages, but are a kind of beaufets; but sure no one need perplex himself in consulting what they were intended to hold; for such are common in all old buildings;

* If we allow authenticity to *Offian's* poems—the wind coming down in eddies through these openings, may have made the harps hung upon the wall produce a wild æolian tune, and utter those alarming sounds in the night, that supernatural music, to which they often refer.

DUN-DORNADILLA DESCRIBED.

and here perhaps have been enriched with drinking-shells and other ornamental utensils, no less esteemed in their day, than now the finest porcelain or vases of gold.

THE argument against *Dun-Dornadilla's* having been a fortress, because it is commanded by a neighbouring hill, is not valid. Arrows from the adjacent eminence could have no effect; and it is not so high, as that large stones could be thrown into the building, and none but those of enormous size could possibly make any impression. It appears to me placed in one of the best situations which the extensive dale affords. 'Tis on a rising ground, sufficiently distant from the river not to be overflowed; and covered on the north by the hill, yet not so near as to suffer from an enemy on it.

THIS is by far the most entire circular tower that I have seen, and probably the most compleat of the kind now extant: so remotely situated from the dwellings of men, it seems only to have suffered from the hand of time. I observed several nearer the coast, in *Strathnaver*, but they were completely ruined, having afforded materials for other adjacent buildings. This is said to be but seven miles from the north shore, but it is a long half-day's journey from the head of the firth of *Tongue*: the dale, a few miles down, opens into *Loch-eribol*, a very noble, safe, and extensive harbour; perhaps yielding in excellence only to *Cromarty-bay*, of any road in *Scotland*.

THE highest parts of the walls of *Dun-Dornadilla*, are not thirty feet, but must have been much more; for the door, which like that of the one in *Sutherland*, has been at least six feet high, is at present one half of its height choaked up with rubbish
fallen

fallen from the top. The building is near fifty yards in circumference. The inner area twenty-seven feet diameter. There are three distinct rows of apartments, and passages, within the wall: I walked up and down different stairs from the first to the second story, but those to the third seemed too confined, probably owing to many of the stones being displaced or fallen in.

THIS place takes its name from a monarch, on whom our early historians have bestowed that of *Dornadilla*. He was, say they, a great hunter; first established laws of the chase*; reigned twenty-eight years in peace and plenty, and died *only* two hundred and thirty-three years before CHRIST†.

THIS valley, called *Strath-more* from its size, is also called *Strath-Arindal*‡. Bishop *Stillingfleet* endeavours to evince that *Arindal*, the name of the strath, and *Dornadil*, the title of the tower, are essentially the same, and have reference to the eminent warrior who resided in the dale and built the tower.

THERE is also a fragment of a very old *Erse* poem, to the same import, still repeated in these parts. In this, *Dun-Dornadilla* is celebrated in a manner somewhat similar to what you have quoted with respect to *Caisteal Teilbhab*§.

Dun Dornghil, mac Duiff, er antaobh ri meira do'frrha.

Seacht mile, O muir, ans an rod a racha na fir do Gholl'n.

The general import of which, I am informed, may be gathered from the following lines:

* *Boet.* lib. ii. 16.

† *Lesley de Gest. Scotl.* 82.

‡ *Orig. Brit. Pre.*

§ *Voyage to the Hebrides.*

THE ANTIENT TOWERS NOT TEMPLES.

Seven miles from ocean, in the chearful dale,
 Basks the large tower where *Dornadilla* reigns :
 From thence, when war or civil feuds prevail,
 The warriors pour into the *Caithness* plains.

THESE traditional lines prove the use of the buildings: the numbers * and the contiguity of them in all parts of the north, as well as the isles, sufficiently shew that they were not designed for temples. There must have been more temples than houses, or else these parts must have been a nation of priests. I will not admit the argument drawn from their being situated always near to water †, because water is generally allowed to be full as requisite for œconomical as for religious purposes. Neither will I allow that their circular form ‡ gives them any better pretences to that sacred title. The circles for that purpose were formed of large upright stones placed equidistant. They are more or less numerous, or consist of a greater or fewer number of circles §, from the single circle to the more compleat arch-temple of *Stonehenge*. Such might be the horrid circle of *Brumo* ||, if the name ever existed but in *Ossian*, for there are multitudes of that kind in *Scandinavia* **; and others inclosing remains of heroes ††. You yourself have by no means neglected enquiry ‡‡ after the former species of building, and found one instance now existing in *Norway*: and you have also quoted to

* *Archæologia*, V. 252.

† The same, 253.

‡ The same, 252.

§ See this exemplified in *Mona Antiqua* passim. *Borlase* *Antiq. Cornwall*, 183, &c. tab. xiii. xiv.

|| *Archæologia*, V. 252.

** *Dalhberg*,

lib. III. tab. 280.

†† *Dalhberg*, III. 315. *Worm. Mon. Dan.* 63.

‡‡ *Tour in Scotl.* 1772, Part I. 336.

me another greatly resembling them, engraven in *Dalhberg's Suecia Antiqua & Hodierna*. You likewise suspect a third (engraven in the same work) to be referred to this class of buildings; and in all the three instances they are called towers or forts, and not temples. These likewise direct us to the nation from which they took their origin *.

FROM this strath westward, the mountains stretch up into the monstrous cliffs of *Edrabills*: into the deep recesses of that *Alpine* region nature seems to have forbid all access. If the way is forced a little into some rugged dale, the traveller is surrounded with a stupendous inclosure of rock—and the overhanging precipices of craggy hills, towering on all sides immense, baffle perseverance. Its internal scenery remains yet unexplored. We turned southward up *Strathmore*, and on climbing the neighbouring height, found a plain of many miles lie before us, stretching between the declivities of the hills. Large spaces of the country there are flat, with much good pasture in them, but the ground often very rough and scraggy, interspersed with pools. These extensive fields seem to be what is laid down in our maps as

DIRRY-MORE FOREST;

But at present there is scarce the vestige of a tree discoverable in it.

IN passing through this more level tract, numerous herds of cattle came in view: near to one of the grassy fields where they

* *Dahlberg*, lib. II. tab. lxiv.

WRETCHED HABITATION. LOCH-NAVER.

were feeding, was reared the keeper's booth, the most wretched hovel imaginable; with difficulty to be crawled into, and one could not stand upright when within; it seemed the more comfortable and forlorn, on account of its distance from any other human habitation. Yet here was straw for a bed, a bottle of milk, and some pieces of bread. It is possible men may be contented with such spare accommodation, with such hard and scanty fare. I strove in that cot to find shelter from a heavy rain, but soon found such confinement seem worse than an open exposure to the severest weather.

THESE pasture-grounds are bounded on the east by an exceeding rough moss, stretching far along an extensive lake, called *Loch-loyal*. There the coarse heath, arrived at the state of shrubs, made the paths difficult and unpleasant; the moss also, being intersected with deep sloughs, and in many places morassy, it was judged expedient to go straight to the lake; and its beach afforded a more eligible path, although covered with very large rough stones. Several islands in the lake, of far superior verdure to the fields on its banks, enliven the large expanse of water, which stretching several miles, far as the eye could follow it, was lost among the northern mountains.

SEVERAL miles to the south-east, spreads *Loch-Naver*, a fine piece of water, six or eight miles long; a river running from it communicates with the sea at the bay of *Far*, and brings salmon up to the banks of the loch: the lofty hill of *Cliberg* gradually rising from the west-side of the lake, enriches and protects the neighbouring soil. *Cliberg* has much good pasture on it; round its sides are scattered forests of birch and hazel, which yield

cover for deer, and goats and roes. It formerly abounded with firs, but they are now only discoverable by their withered remains in the soil. The more level parts of the hill are occupied by herds and flocks, belonging to some farms which enrich the banks of the loch. This seems one of the most pleasing parts of *Strathnaver*. The south-west end of the loch comes within a few miles of

M O A S - D A L E,

a village situated on a fine level field, watered by a small river, which spreads into several branches, and prettily divides the plain: the grassy turf along the banks is smooth, even, and luxuriant; the soil of the adjacent arable grounds seems naturally rich and fertile, and their agriculture attended with neither much trouble nor care.

THE inn where we are to sleep, is supplied with all necessary articles of refreshment; they are soon to have even a feather bed, for the accommodation of travellers: but I must sleep on heath, and the good woman tells me, "my sleep shall be sweet," for the rushes that form the pillow were pulled with her own hand, at sun-set, fresh from the bog.

JUNE 29th. The heath-bed has met with various approbation. *Buchanan* * gives a good account of it. "They place the roots downward, and the brush upward in so artful a manner, that one sleeps upon them softly as on down:" and describes the

* Hist. lib. I.

UNCOMFORTABLE LODGING.

qualities of heath to be such as are powerful to give strength and fresh vigour to the nerves, so "that they who lie down at night faint and weary, rise in the morning active and lively." *Smollet* supports the same idea— " * The layer of heath was not only soft and elastic, but the plant being in flower, diffused an agreeable fragrance, which is wonderfully refreshing and restorative." There is reason to suspect the validity of these remarks. Fatigue will lead to sound repose: fortunate hardness of constitution, improved by exercise and toil, reconciles one to any place of rest; but the heath-bed is far from pleasant or easy. I felt, however, last night, an additional inconvenience; the bed prepared for me was near the fire-place, consequently almost under that opening in the roof which answers both for the window and the chimney: it rained, and the drift was blown plentifully in upon it; and I was surprized, in the morning, to find the mountains white with a new fall of snow: it was a midsummer treat I little looked for. The wind coming down from the hills, still bearing the fleet along, made the air intensely cold, and piercing as in the dead of winter.

On leaving *Mouas-dale*, we had again to seek our way through the most disagreeable moors, chilled with the northern blasts, and often wading on a most uncertain bottom. After wandering over one dreary hill, found some miles of good road, upon the banks of a rivulet. The next hill, about nine miles from *Mouas-dale*, is rocky, and almost destitute of soil. On the top of it, there is a pyramid of rough stones, raised as a monu-

* Exped. Hum. Clink.

ment

ment of the half-way stage to *Larg*. Here it is usual for travellers to rest a while; but the badness of the day, and the wind and rain, induced us to push on. The day cleared up as we went down into the neighbouring dale, and we found better accommodation in a less inclement sky. A very rural banquetting-house is constructed in the middle of a green, and called

LORD REAY'S TABLE.

A smooth plot of fine grass is nearly encircled by the rivulet, in the center of it is raised a square mound of earth and stones well covered with turf; a sofa of the same materials is very dexterously carried round at a suitable distance from the table, part of one end is more particularly formed into the shape of a large chair, and has been, evidently, intended for a seat of distinction. But the whole is so entire, and in such good repair, as to lay no claim to any thing of remote antiquity. I suppose it may have been built this century, for the accommodation of lord *Reay's* family, when, visiting the south, they travel to and from their seat at *Tongue*. Here we spread our viands, and rested an hour: the ponies found excellent pasture on the banks of the stream around us.

For eight or ten miles thence, found the country less rough and hilly; and if properly drained, many of the fields would amply repay the expence of cultivation. The bottoms through which the rivulets run, are often an extensive level, and generally of a very fresh verdure. They might comfortably support a number of inhabitants; and it is to be regretted, that the proprietors pay no more attention to the peopling of them. To

the greatest part of *Strathnaver*, however, that observation will by no means apply. As far as I could judge, it is no surprize that the more mountainous regions should be left waste and desolate. These horrid wilds, in the heights, are too rugged and stubborn, to indemnify the toils of agriculture: and in the hollows between the hills, the swamps are too deep and inaccessible, almost ever to give place to the dwellings of men. Without much spirit of prophecy, one may affirm, that these desert tracts will remain uncultivated for ages; that rocky wilderness be for ever forlorn. Nothing but earthquakes or volcanos can ever render them habitable.

I LOOK back with pleasure to those lofty mountains, lessening and receding from the eye, am satisfied to have wandered so long amidst these wilds; they have left impressions on my mind that will not be easily effaced: but must rejoice that I now can turn to more enlivening prospects. The finely-wooded banks of *Loch-shin* are in view, with the church and village of *Larg*. From thence, I learn, there are good made roads; a most agreeable circumstance, that has been wanting for near a hundred miles, and considerably embarrassed the travelling.

I AM convinced the interior parts of this country are very inaccurately laid down in the maps of *Scotland*, and the names of places are often either altogether wanting, or at an amazing distance from where they ought to be. I had *Dorret's* map along with me, and found much pleasure in its accuracy, so far as I applied to it for ascertaining any distances along the east and north shores. There they seem marked with such fidelity, that one could fix the time of reaching any particular place.

But.

But here, for instance, the distance from *Mouas-dale* to the kirk of *Larg*, measures on the map but four or five miles, yet they are computed eighteen, and the travelling of them has taken up the greatest part of a day.

L O C H - S H I N

is a charming piece of water, of great extent, winding among the hills; the woods frequently stretching down to the water's edge. One cannot command but a view of a few miles of it at a time: it is said to be twenty in length. Near to the kirk of *Larg*, the south-east end of *Loch-shin* falls down in broad cascades on each side of a small island; and being soon after confined into a narrow channel, forms a river of the same name, which pouring along with considerable rapidity, winds its way towards the firth of *Dornoch*. The river

S H I N,

soon after quitting the loch, increases its violence amidst precipitous banks, and roars beneath the shade of overhanging woods. Within about two or three miles of the place where it falls into the firth, it forms a noble and weighty cataract, by tumbling over a great ridge of rock which runs across its course. The bellowing of the fall is heard long ere it appear in view. The way is intricate, through a birch wood, full of rocks and briers. One can proceed but slowly, and must be directed by the noise. That vast cascade must be but seldom visited; for no path is found among the trees. The torrent hurls over a precipice of prodigious height, and the rock is excavated underneath.

APPROACH TO INHABITED COUNTRY.

neath the fall, so that a large void is left within. The whole river impetuously precipitated from above, thrown over to a great distance from the foot of the rock, such an ample space is left in a manner dry within the cataract, that, as I was informed, some have been bold enough to venture in and walk between the torrent and the rock; but it did not appear to me practicable, without the greatest danger.

FROM the ferry at *Inver-shin*, the

FIRTH OF DORNOCH

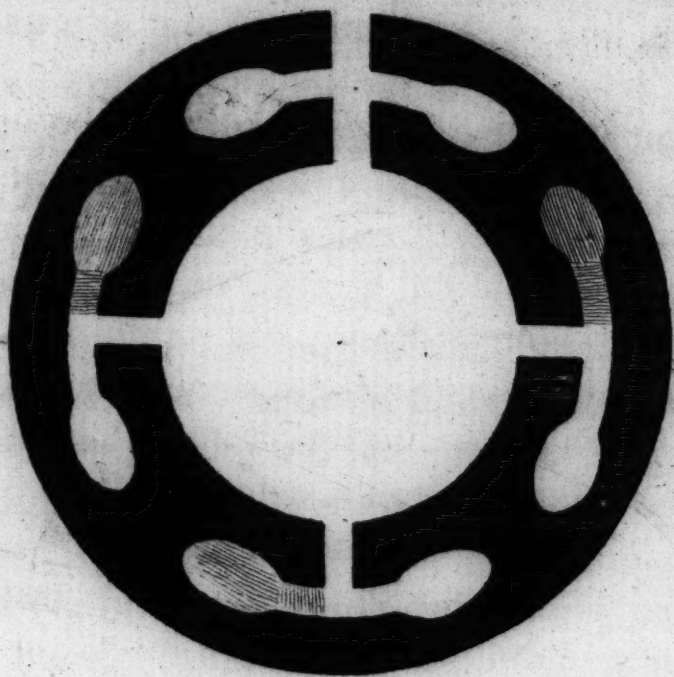
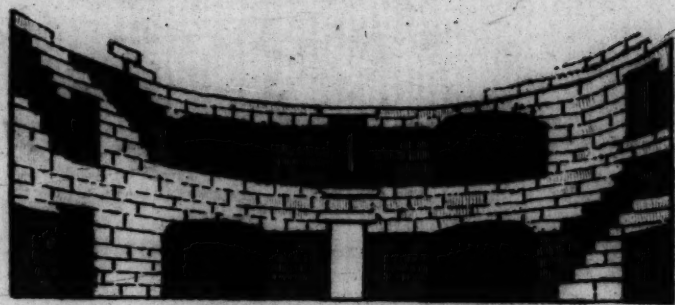
presents a pleasant prospect: the rich banks of the firth, crowded with farms, and animated with all the appearances of industry; small vessels sailing up and down; people busy preparing for loading and unloading them; fishermen attending their nets; the ferry-boats ready at a call; the extensive prospect of the rich lands in *Ross-shire*; and a good inn seen among trees on the opposite shore. All this was not only comfortable, as promising better accommodation; but yielded a variety of reflection, as of scenery highly delightful and entertaining, when compared with that stagnation and blank in life, which regions void of inhabitants exhibit to the mind.

JUNE 30th. Stopped at *Dun-alisbaig*, on the south banks of the firth: it is a round tower, alluded to by Mr. Gordon. A good description is given by Mr. *Maitland**, in the last volume of the *Archæologia*, briefly repeated by Mr. *Anderson*. It

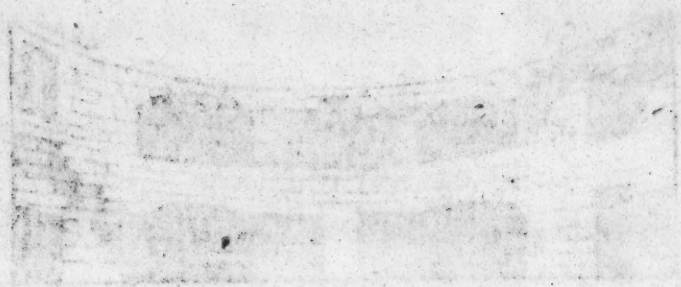
* Hist. Scotl. I. 145.

XX.

118.



PLAN & SECTION OF DUNALISHAIG.



has been a very sumptuous edifice of the kind. The wall is twelve feet thick. There are four chambers in it on the ground-floor, with narrow passages of communication: about nine feet from the ground, a circle of stones projects, broad enough to walk round the inside of the building. One step up from these, four doors open to the apartments of the second story, which have also a communication, by means of narrow stair-cases, with some of the chambers below. The area of the court or hall within, is twenty-seven feet diameter. No part of the wall in this castle, is now above sixteen feet high. The neighbouring inhabitants said it was the tower of *Fingal*, and recorded the prodigies of his strength. I beg the favour of you to cause to be engraven the exact plan of the first floor, and a section of the chambers in both stories, which I now inclose. It supplies the omissions in the print given in the *Archæologia* *.

BETWEEN *Dun-alishaig* and *Tain*, there are several monumental stones. Seven of them are remarkably distinguished in the traditions of the country, and are said to be erected over the graves of seven *Norwegian* princes: they had sought alliance with the *Caledonian* chiefs, married in their families, and settled among them; but were cut off in civil feuds, which arose from their interfering interests and claims. The obelisks alluded to have, however, been erected at very different æras. One at *Cariblair* seems to be of great antiquity; it is placed on a circular mount formed by art; is a rude stone of about twelve feet high; inscribed on it are some mathematical figures, and

* *Archæologia*, V. tab.

CROMARTY. FORT-GEORGE.

a fish above. Another at *Edwardton* (a pleasant village) exhibits a horse and his rider in well-executed bas-relief; on a circle above is raised an elegant cross. This last I therefore apprehend to be of far the most modern date.

FROM *Edwardton*, a ride of half a dozen miles brought me to *Tain*, where, the circle of *Caithness*, *Sutherland*, and *Strathnaver* being completed, I considered my studies as at an end; and being furnished with better horses, hastened home with all possible expedition.

CROSSED the firth of *Cromarty*, at the town, which lies under the south promontory: an extensive rope-work and brewery are new establishments at the place, and succeeding well. On the head-land, which covers the bay, there are some well-grown woods; through these Mr. *Ross*, who has an elegant seat at a little distance from the town, has cut some charming walks, from which there is variety of very grand and delightful prospects; on one hand, of the rugged cliffs along the sea-shore; on the other, of the rich banks of the firth, stretching all the way to *Dingwall*.

FROM *Cromarty* it is but a short stage to the ferry at *Ardersier*; and while the boat was getting ready, I took the inclosed sketch of *Fort-George*, a modern fortification, founded after the year 1745, to secure a passage into the firth of *Inverness*, and to form a *place d'armes* in case of any future rebellion. The expence was immense; and by the change of events since that time, it appears a mere useless memorial of the state of that turbulent period.

INTRODUCTION



W. Watts sculp.

NEW FORT GEORGE

I N T R O D U C T I O N

T O T H E

E X T R A C T S F R O M T O R F Æ U S .

THE more antient annals of *Caithness*, *Sutherland*, and *Strathnaver*, seem in a great measure to have been altogether uncanvassed by *Scotch* historians. The record of events that occurred at a great distance from the seat of government, and on that account the less interesting to the crown, and but of little moment to the policy of the kingdom, has been left entirely neglected—though from their novelty, variety, and importance, many of these occurrences, related by *Torfæus*, might prove entertaining embellishments to a history of *Scotland*. The original records of these events, their not being extant in the country itself, has probably been another circumstance, which contributed to that universal silence, observed by our historians with respect to the strange revolutions, which took place in these northern counties.

WRITING does not seem to have been practised by any native of the north of *Scotland*, previous to that knowledge of letters which advanced along with *Christianity* : and the light of the true
R
religion

INTRODUCTION TO THE

religion had not dawned on *Caitbness* in the tenth century. Any authentic memoirs of this country, therefore, in the earlier ages, can only be gleaned from the written testimonies preserved in *Norway*, of the transactions of that nation with the inhabitants of these territories: and the intricacy of that research, together with the few interesting events that occur, amidst the tedious detail of many particular circumstances, has made the little knowledge that may be had of the history of the north, to be left in the greater obscurity.

THE situation of these counties is likewise such as seems long to have prevented any free communication with the south of *Scotland*, or even with the neighbouring shires of *Ross* or *Inverness*. As an evidence of this, it may be remarked, that although *Adamnan*, abbot of *Jona*, says, that St. *Columba* was well received in the north of *Scotland*, in the middle of the sixth century; and that *Brudius*, king of the *Picts*, who had a royal seat at *Inverness*, was by him converted to Christianity; yet he mentions *Columba's* crossing over to the opposite side of *Lochness*, as the most daring effort of his zeal. But whatever difficulties there may have been to encounter in *Ross-shire*, arising from the different manners of the tribes, or from their opposing interests; all these are strengthened by an additional barrier, which might have ever prevented the *Keldeis* from gaining access into *Caitbness*. That vast range of mountains which pervades *Sutherland*, and terminates in the immense promontory of the *Ord*, extends also to the western shore. This mountainous tract, defended by the rough inhabitants, jealous of any encroachments from strangers, seems to have been an insuperable bar to knowledge making any

successful advances in that line. We therefore find, that the northern extremities of the island did not receive the light of Christianity, nor the knowledge of letters, by any gradual advances from the south; but they were communicated from *Norway*, during the expeditions undertaken by that nation (in the end of the tenth or beginning of the eleventh century) to make settlements in the *Orkney* islands, and on the coast of *Caithness*. As therefore the *Picts*, and *Caledonians* of these parts, could at that period have no written history of their own, if we wish to learn any thing certain of them, it must be gathered from *Torfæus*. His compilation seems to have comprehended every material piece of information extant in his time*.

To many anecdotes he, no doubt, gave place, that were supported only by the general authority of oral traditions. By numbers who returned to *Norway*, after having been personally engaged in the transactions on the coast of *Caithness*, the particulars of their expeditions, and the state of the country would be frequently repeated; and their concurring testimonies sufficient to establish a general narrative. But the chiefs and commanders from *Norway*, were also accompanied by bards, chosen on purpose to celebrate their fortunes and the success of their arms.

* *Thormodus Torfæus* was a native of *Iceland*, patronized, on account of his great abilities, by *Frederic III.* king of *Denmark*, by whom he was extremely beloved. His son, *Christian V.* appointed him his historian for the kingdom of *Norway*, with a considerable pension; which was continued to him by *Frederic IV.* His great learning, his assiduity, and his skill in his native language, enabled him to discharge his post with the utmost credit to himself, and advantage to the public. He died about the year 1720, aged 81.

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Their songs came in time to be penned, and received as the most authentic repositories of historical facts. And much of *Torfaeus* rests on their validity.—He had, however, the aid of much more convincing memorials. When the state of these provinces became more interesting to the crown of *Norway*, an historiographer was appointed to reside in the island of *Flota*, on purpose to collect and record such transactions, and other pieces of information with respect to the north of *Scotland*, as might be deemed worthy of notice, or of importance to their future enterprizes. These narrations compose a diffuse voluminous work, called *Codex Floteiences*; and to this *Torfaeus* is indebted for the most important part of his history.

THAT compilation is therefore probably the best, and only authentic record, of transactions in the north that is now to be found, and all without their reach, seems concealed by one general veil, within which no feature of truth can be discerned.

TACITUS indeed, in the life of *Julius Agricola*, mentions, that ere the end of the first century, the *Roman* fleet had sailed round the north of *Scotland*, that they landed on some of the *Orcades* to refresh; and saw *Ultima Thule* white with snow; perhaps the distant mountains of *Sketland*, probably the isle of *Foula*, from which the word *Thule* might have been readily formed. But this is all that can be learned from the *Roman* writers. They give no account of the condition or manners of the inhabitants of these northern regions, though they evidently allude to their being peopled. From that early period a number of ages elapsed, and these countries may have undergone numberless revolutions;

tions; the knowledge of which can never be revived. We are presented with an universal blank in their story, until the ninth century.

ABOUT that period, when the *Picts* were expelled from their settlements in the south of *Scotland*, by the policy of *Gregory* the Great, those who inhabited the plains of *Caithness*, and the dales of *Sutherland* and *Strathnaver*, seem to have experienced a similar fate, from the rapacity of the clans of the *Cairn*, or ancient *Caledonians*, who inhabited the mountains.

It would appear, that the northern *Picts*, favoured by the fertility of their settlements, had begun to enjoy leisure and reflection, and made some considerable progress in agriculture, &c. while the inhabitants of the more barren and mountainous parts of the country subsisted by pasturage and hunting only. It is probable, these last had long indulged the prospect of taking possession of the richer grounds which they saw cultivated in the dales, ere that general revolution took place, by which the *Picts* were expelled from their country. Notwithstanding this, the *Picts*, by degrees advancing to easier life, their martial spirit and discipline might become relaxed by their more fortunate situation; and thence they would prove by no means a match for the highland warriors; who, inured to hardships by the rigour of their climate, accustomed to vigorous enterprize in procuring by hunting their daily food, their lives being one continued exertion of vigilance, activity, and strength; they would overcome, with irresistible impetuosity and perseverance, every obstacle which stood in the way of their possessing these territories, which promised them easier and happier days. Thus it in all

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all probability was, that the *Picts* were drove from their native possessions, and compelled to seek for shelter and safety upon foreign shores. Previous to this period, they had frequent communication with the *Orkney* islands, thence naturally sought their first asylum there; but whatever they might relate to the islanders, concerning the possibility of recovering their possessions, or by whatever inducements solicit their aid; it is probable the scattered and independent state of the chiefs and commanders there, would prove unfavourable to any proposal for retrieving the fortunes of their suppliants. They delighted in piracy and depredation, were inured to enterprize and conflict, and would warm with the hope of plunder; but had no union of force sufficient to promise them success, should they attempt to invade the coast of *Scotland*, defended by these resolute warriors, who had expelled the *Pictish* nation. It appears, that therefore many of the exiles migrated from the *Orkades* to *Shetland*, and thence to the opposite coasts of *Norway*. There a more attentive ear was lent to their story; it became a momentous subject to that enterprizing nation. The *Picts* would very naturally give the most favourable representations of the fertility of the north of *Scotland*. The remembrance of their native possessions, "the pleasant fields they had left," would be peculiarly grateful to them in a foreign land: they would describe the luxuriance of their inheritances in the fairest lights: and their report made its way to the throne.

HAROLD, an aspiring and resolute monarch, warmly espoused the cause of the exiles; he saw that the expedition promised new settlements to his favourites, gave his officers new commands,

mands, and would strengthen and extend his influence and his power. Confederate princes and chieftains, under the king, accustomed to follow the schemes of his ambition, saw in this the aggrandizement of their families, and eagerly closed with the proposal of assisting the *Picts* to recover their lost dominion. Many indigent adventurers were delighted with the enterprize, and a grand expedition took place; their numbers were increased at *Sbetland* and in the *Orcades*. Besides finding many of the exile *Picts* there ready to join the armament, the naval commanders had probably learned from experience, that it was their interest not to oppose, but to second the enterprizes of the *Norwegians*; and, being accustomed to piracy and depredation, were led by an easy transition to join the squadron with their vessels, on what seemed at least a more honourable kind of adventure. All these acting together in combination, and united under the command of one leader, their force became superior to every opposition: for, whether it was owing to the *Picts* being now supported by the discipline and arms of their allies, or that the *Catie* being fatiated with the spoil of the plains, chose to retire to their native mountains, cannot be ascertained; but a successful descent was made by the armament upon the north of *Scotland*, colonies were established all along the coasts of *Caithness*, and it became a *Norwegian* province. This event is what introduces the subject of the following annals.

EXTRACTS FROM TORFÆUS.

SECTION I.

CIR. ANNUM
850.

SIGURDUS, son to *Ronald*, a powerful nobleman, obtained the chief command of the squadron and forces destined for the re-establishment of the *Picts*, and settling colonies in the north of *Scotland*, which should own allegiance to the crown of *Norway*. These ends were soon, in all appearance, so fully accomplished, and the enterprize crowned in *Caithness* with such favourable success, that *Sigurdus* was ambitious to visit other provinces, and make settlements there also.

THE distant hills, on the opposite coast of the firth of *Moray*, are sometimes visible from the *Caithness* shore. This circumstance gave rise to another expedition. *Sigurdus* equipped a number of vessels, and landing in *Moray*, built the fort of *Burgh-head*. Here he met with a very different reception: and, in a conflict with some of the clans of *Caledonians* that defended their country, he was mortally wounded, and left his brother *Haladus* to succeed him in the command. He was timid, irresolute, and indolent. During the establishment of the colony in *Moray*, and while many of the most daring officers were there, the influence and authority of the *Norse* commanders became daily weaker; and now the chieftains in *Caithness*, in a great measure, recovered their antient independence; they acknowledged no superior in the person of *Haladus*; and the buccaneers from the *Orkney* islands used great freedoms with his ships

ships and stores. Finding himself thus surrounded by intrepid chieftains and daring freebooters, he chose rather to consult his own personal safety, by relinquishing his station, than encounter the trouble of establishing subordination in *Caitbness*; he therefore returned to *Norway*, led a private life, and sunk into oblivion.

RONALD justly considered *Haladus's* conduct, as what entailed dishonour on his family, which had been chosen to preside over these provinces; and in order, as soon as possible, to wipe off the stain, he called his other sons before him, and demanded whether any of them chose to be appointed to that station which *Haladus* had relinquished; on the terms of undertaking to clear the seas of pirates, to chastise the unruly chieftains, and encounter all the difficulties of establishing more perfect order and tranquillity on these shores.

EINAR, a bold and resolute character, a man of penetration and prudence, accepted the charge; and, on his father's application to *Harold*, was created an earl. He sailed from *Norway*, with a considerable band of chosen men, in a galley of twenty oars. And although he could not doubt, but that there were numbers of his countrymen in *Caitbness* ready to support his authority, yet he approached with caution, came to the chieftains with terms of alliance and friendship, and formed such connections among them, as happily prevented all rivalry for power; he gained their affections, and became supreme arbiter among them.

By these means he firmly established himself in the government; and, keeping a strong armament at sea, and a number of

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warlike followers, awed the disturbers of peace, and administered equity ; and enjoyed a temporary quiet in the honourable station to which he was advanced.

BUT the sons of *Harold*, king of *Norway*, learning the splendid and happy state in which *Einar* lived, in these new territories, began to repine, that any but those of royal blood should have been invested with such a high command ; and, unknown to the king, entered into a conspiracy to deprive the family of *Ronald* of their influence and honours. *Haldanus*, who took the lead in the exploit, having seduced several of the commanders of the royal fleet to second his views, sailed with a small squadron, and surprized *Einar* in the *Orcades*.

EINAR, unsuspecting of any attack from *Norway*, and finding himself otherwise easy and secure, was not prepared to repel such an invader ; he therefore declined all contest, and privately retired into *Caitbness*, leaving *Haldanus* to enjoy the most flattering prospect of the success of his design. And though he perceived that, under the title of heir to the crown of *Norway*, he might soon altogether undermine his influence, and blast the laurels which he had been so studious to obtain : yet he also trusted, that the other commanders, if deprived of that daring prince their leader, would soon submit to his authority. He therefore made no resistance in open war, but accomplished his views by stratagem. He kept a watchful eye over *Haldanus* ; and, learning that he had separated from his forces, and gone to visit a detached island, he prepared a chosen band for the exploit, and consulted his expedition to take place in the dead of night. In consequence of the precautions he had taken, *Haldanus's* retreat was cut off, and

and all communication with his officers and adherents on the other islands prevented.

THUS the prince of *Norway* was made captive; and nothing but his blood could expiate his crime in *Einar's* fight. With horrible solemnity, a sacrifice was prepared, and *Haldanus*, the destined victim, was made an offering to *Odin* *: and upon his remains a tumulus of stones was raised, to perpetuate the memory of the event.

WHEN intelligence of this unfortunate adventure of *Haldanus* had reached the court of *Norway*, *Harold*, grieved and enraged at such an instance of cruelty committed on his son, and considering it as an ignominy done to his family, by one whom he had loaded with honours, he came in person to *Orkney* with a considerable armament, on purpose to chastise *Einar* for his ingratitude.

EINAR dreaded his resentment: and, warned of his approach, strengthened himself in *Caitbness*, making every hostile preparation to repel his attacks. By the connections that he had formed, and the alliances which he had made with the families of rank, he had become so respected and esteemed, that they considered his interest and honour as their own; and united to defend his cause against the king of *Norway*.

HAROLD landed in the *Orcades* without opposition; but learned there, that *Einar* could give a most formidable resistance to any force that attempted to invade the coasts of *Caitbness*: finding, therefore, that it would not be easily in his power to inflict that

* The *Scandinavian* divinity.

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exemplary punishment which he thought *Einar* deserving of, he dropped his design, and offered terms of accommodation. By these *Einar* being presented with the prospect of retaining his government in quiet, yielded to a demand from *Harold*, of sixty merks of gold, to be paid as an acknowledgment of his crime, and the dependance of his state upon the crown of *Norway*. *Harold* having levied the fine, failed on other exploits to the south of *Scotland*.

EINAR now resumed his administration, and being relieved from the apprehension of any further disturbance from abroad, exercised all his intrepidity and prudence in enforcing laws of justice and equity, to preserve the internal tranquillity of the country. It is said he had the happiness of seeing the good effects of his political regulations appear, in the better accommodation of the inhabitants, the industry of their rural applications, and in the culture and improvement of the finer arts, which only take place when people are easy and secure. He spent the remainder of his years in peace, and died in a good old age, leaving a son, named *Torphinus*, to succeed him.

SECTION II.

920.

DURING the life of *Torphinus*, it appears that the *Orca-*
ades were frequently subject to depredations from the
Scandinavian adventurers ; and the princes of *Norway* frequently
laid the inhabitants under tribute, as they went on expeditions
to the *Western isles* : yet the coasts of *Caithness* seem to have been
preserved

preserved pretty free from the ravages of foreigners; and its tranquillity was but little disturbed by intestine broils.

BUT the sons of *Torphinus*, grand-children of *Einar*, were not 940.
equally fortunate with their fathers in consulting the measures of quiet and peace: neither the ties of blood, nor the advantages that would have arisen from their mutual friendship, could moderate the extravagance of their ambition, or bring their rivalry within any bounds of policy or discretion. They were numerous. The names of *Havard*, *Liotus*, *Scullius*, and *Lodver*, are remarkable in the story of these times.

HAVARD, heir to the earldom, is celebrated as the best of characters, and gained the title of The Happy. But *Raganilda*, a young lady whom he had married, became attached to *Liotus*, her brother-in-law, and they conspired together against *Havard*, to take away his life; and, to guard against the suspicion's falling on them alone, they engaged some vassals of the family to be their accomplices in the assassination. *Liotus* was brave and daring; but not having openly appeared accessory to the murder, he was, on receiving *Raganilda's* hand, acknowledged successor to the earldom; and, without further bloodshed, quelled for a time all opposition to his claim.

BUT *Scullius*, his elder brother, viewing with indignation and interested envy the insidious scheme, whereby *Liotus* had supplanted him, and unable to effect his resentment by force of arms, resolved to try the expedient of interesting the crown of *Scotland* in his cause; and, by whatever means he had been enabled to judge so readily in this case, he was not disappointed of his hope: for having equipped a few vessels as for a cruise,

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he sailed southward to seek for access to the king : and gaining admittance to *Malcolm* I. besought him to support his cause, and aid him to obtain the possession of his inheritance in the north.

MALCOLM, perceiving that an alliance of friendship with one of chief authority in *Caithness*, might in many respects prove advantageous to his interests there, favoured *Scullius*'s wish, and ordered some vessels with auxiliary forces to be ready to attend him on his return. And, that he might establish the subordination of these northern provinces to the crown of *Scotland*, gave *Scullius* a charter containing a legal title to the earldom as part of his kingdom.

SCULLIUS, thus countenanced by the throne, and invested with authority from government, returned into *Caithness* with considerable eclat.

His known right to the earldom, the apparent legality of the title conferred on him by the king, and above all, the forces by which he was accompanied, conspired together to awe the vassals of *Liotus*, and numbers flocked to his standard. At the time of his arrival in *Caithness*, however, *Liotus* was engaged in making some excursions among the *Orkney* islands, and that circumstance a good deal contributed to the favourable reception which he met with. But *Scullius*, elated with those events, which so highly flattered his wishes, could not rest satisfied with taking proper measures for the defence of *Caithness*, and securing himself there ; but, with the eccentric policy of the age, resolved on attacking his brother in the isles. Having therefore largely augmented his forces, and equipped an
additional

additional number of vessels, he set sail with the armament for the *Orcades*.

BUT *Liotus*, though seemingly inattentive, was not blind to his brother's motions, and was prepared to give him the severest opposition: he had put numbers of the islanders in arms, and taken such precautions as he thought would prove most fatal to the designs of *Scullius*; yet on his approach to these shores, he offered some terms of accommodation: these, however, *Scullius* rejected, and made an unsuccessful attempt to land. A number of his men were cut off, and some vessels destroyed. Disheartened with the fate of this event, he put to sea with the remainder of the armament, and returned to *Caithness*.

Liotus, with all possible expedition, prepared to prosecute his success; he gathered together all the forces which he could raise, manned a number of ships, and embarked with the resolution of landing wherever *Scullius* should be found. By the time *Liotus's* fleet arrived on the coast, *Scullius* had entered into an alliance with *Magbragdus*, thane of *Sutherland*, who was come from *Dunrobin* with a considerable force, and encamped with his ally in the central dales of *Caithness*.

Liotus, however, advanced thither with his whole force. When the armies approached each other, he gave forth an order remarkable for those times, when their conflicts in general were so rashly violent. He charged his followers only to march on with intrepid coolness, and, whatever assaults might be made by the enemy, they were to stand firm and keep their ground on the defensive only. This he did, that the strength of their foes might be wasted in the attack, and his counsel succeeded according

according to his wish. The enemy, impetuous and violent in their first assault, on finding the opposite battalions remain in firm and undisturbed array, soon began to abate of their fruitless fury; and at length their ardour cooled into dismay. When *Liotus* observed that the effects of their disappointment began to be seriously felt, and that they hesitated about a retreat, he ordered his forces, in their turn, to pour their vengeance on the assailants: and they rushing on with fresh vigour, threw the foe into utter confusion, and made them fly on every hand. *Scullius* fell while rallying a chosen band, and left the glory of the day to *Liotus*; yet he also was so desperately wounded, that a few days put a period to his life. The field of battle was about a mile west from *Watten*; and is covered over with the rude monuments of such an event. It is called "*Toftingale*," or "the grave of strangers."

Lodver, brother to the fallen generals, became now of first authority in *Caithness*. He was of an enterprizing genius; and, finding no opposition to his power, and little opportunity of exerting his warlike spirit at home, spent the most of his time in expeditions to the *Western isles*, making depredations on these, and on the coasts of *Ireland*. In one of these excursions, he contracted an alliance with an *Irish* chieftain, called *Kiarval*, by marrying his daughter *Audna*. This lady seems to have been possessed of considerable abilities and address. By *Audna* *Lodver* had a son, named *Sigurd*, many circumstances of whose life, became more memorable than any in that of his father. *Audna* was celebrated for her skill in curious arts, and obtained the reputation of being endowed with magical powers. She profited
of

of these on a very important occasion. When *Sigurd* came of age to take the field—(the honours of persons of rank seem to have been all gathered in the military line)—*Audna* wove a standard for her son: on this the black raven was so well represented, that it seemed floating on the winds, and soaring up to heaven; an emblem of that rapid and triumphant course wherein he would move to fame. Under the influence of this standard, *Audna* told her son, “ he would be prosperous in all his enterprises, unconquerable and victorious in battle;” and, delivering it to *Sigurd* under the solemn sanction of a powerful charm, accompanied it with a becoming address in the following very spirited and valiant terms: “ Your life is most valuable to me; it has ever been the darling object of my care; herein I have exerted all my skill to render it long and fortunate.—But, since immortality is not the privilege of man in this world, and that the Fates, and not any dangers to which mortals are exposed, determine the period of human life:—remember, that it is much more honourable that life should be ended with renown in the exploits of war, than prolonged by inglorious inactivity and ease.”

SIGURD, naturally ambitious to the highest degree, thus encouraged and inspired, in a manner which had all the influence of a supernatural charm upon him, rivalled in bravery, as well as success, the most renowned of his ancestors. He was possessed of a penetrating judgment, great intrepidity of mind, an enlarged understanding, capable of forming the most extensive plans of government; by these, at the head of a widely-scattered military force, he maintained despotic authority in the north,

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and preserved a vast extent of territory subject to his control. Possessing the entire dominion of the *Orcades*, and having the gallies of the naval chiefs there at command, he often pillaged the *Western isles*, and laid them under tribute. And, exercising all the powers of a monarch, in the north of *Scotland*, rendered the *Black Raven* formidable to the thanes of *Ross-shire* and *Moray*, exerting the authority of a prince over them, and over many chieftains in *Argyleshire*, in defiance of all the menaces of *Keneth III.* to whom they complained. Thus, for many years, *Sigurd* flourished in the north, maintaining unrivalled rank and power.

SECTION III.

1000.

ABOUT this period Christianity had dawned on *Scandinavia*, and became the established religion in the seat of government in *Norway*. Its doctrines interwove themselves with the policy of the nation: its principles, so nearly interesting to human happiness, made their farther publication an object of much moment to the adventurous princes, and gave a new law to their enterprizes. While the power of these principles was acting with original force upon the minds of the people, and their zeal rendered them ambitious of any exploit, whereby they could diffuse their influence; *Olaus*, prince of *Norway*, equipped a squadron destined to carry the knowledge of the gospel to other shores.

On this pious adventure he was accompanied, not only by numbers of all ranks, whom, as usual, a love of enterprize invited;

vited; but by many persons of distinguished knowledge and abilities, men of sincere piety, who had become particularly well acquainted with the Christian doctrines, and entertained a deep sense of their infinite importance.

THESE entered into the fleet, joyful in the prospect of spreading the truths which they revered, through yet unenlightened countries; and the squadron soon appeared off the *Orcades*.

SIGURDIS, in the course of his career of glory, was banqueting in the island of *South-Ronaldsha*. Confiding in the greatness of his fame, that no foreign power whatever would venture, in a hostile manner, to approach his coasts; he beheld, without anxiety, the vast numbers of the fleet from *Norway*. *Olaus*, learning the easy unprepared situation of the earl, brought the squadron to anchor, in the harbour (now called *Saint Margaret's Hope*) where the vessels attending on *Sigurd* lay: and though he took every precaution to block up the port, sent a friendly message ashore, begging of the earl to come to a conference aboard his ship. He, with suitable magnanimity, consented; probably thinking it was to consult on some adventure to the western seas; and went accompanied only by *Kindius*, his son, and a few select attendants.

OLAUS, secure in the midst of his numerous fleet, and thus with unlooked-for ease having got *Sigurd* entirely in his power, opened his embassy in an amicable, but in a most deliberate and formidable manner; declaring, "that, as the heir of *Harold*,
" he claimed the sovereignty of all these provinces over which
" *Sigurd* had extended his sway, and had brought a force sufficient to support his claim: that the life and fortunes of

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“ the earl were now at his disposal.—But that it was so far from
 “ his intention to take advantage of these circumstances, to do
 “ any thing prejudicial to *Sigurdis*, his interests, or honour, that
 “ he declared he had intentionally come from *Norway*, to form
 “ a new alliance with him—one of a superior nature to what
 “ he was yet acquainted with, upon the principles of a divine
 “ revelation which they had received from heaven :” but, on
 purpose that he might the more seriously and devoutly accede
 to the terms of accommodation, it would become absolutely
 necessary for him to abjure the religious ceremonies and the gods
 of his fathers.

SIGURDIS, although astonished and confounded at such an
 address; though awed by his critical situation, wherein he saw the
 only means of preserving his life and fortune, was to relinquish
 that worship which time immemorial had hallowed and establish-
 ed ;—declared, with much firmness, that compliance with such
 a demand, was what would require the utmost caution and deli-
 beration : “ for that he did not esteem himself wiser than his
 “ fathers, who had uniformly venerated the tenets and rites of
 “ that religion which he followed.”

How far by this time the antient *Scandinavian* theology had
 been interwoven with that of the north of *Scotland*, cannot be
 easily ascertained ; but the many remains of *Druid* temples ex-
 tant in *Caitbness*, leave little room to doubt of the general
 character of the religion which took place there in early periods.
 The pure principles of *Druidism* are memorable and valuable.
 A state of immortality, and the rewards of virtue there ; the
 superintendence of one supreme and universal Providence, the
 protector

protector of the just, and punisher of the perfidious; were tenets which gave dignity to their sacred rites, and properly awed the minds of those who were accustomed to attend the solemnities of that religion. Still may we hold these circles in some degree venerable; for there the paths of goodness were enlightened, and sacrifices flamed in honour of the Supreme Being. From the *Sun*, the most glorious representative of the divine benignity; from *thunder*, the most awful demonstration of almighty power; and from *truth*, one of the most exalted attributes of intelligent being; they borrowed the phrases which were used to adumbrate the Divinity: hence we form some idea of the nature of their worship.

SIGURDIS seems to have been so deeply impressed with a sense of the truth and moment of the principles on which he had been accustomed to pay his devotions to Heaven, "that he
" could not easily apprehend what authority *Olaus* could have
" to abrogate the established worship of the country, and deem
" those temples prophane, which, from the earliest ages, had
" been consecrated to sacred use. He therefore begged of *Olaus*
" that he might be well informed, how they came to be per-
" suaded of the divine truth of these new tenets; and in what
" they excelled the system of religion which their forefathers
" had held in such veneration; and persisted in it, that with-
" out such satisfactory evidence and instruction on the subject,
" it was unreasonable to demand his assent."

OLAUS would not deign to yield to this dilatory manner of producing conviction. He was at no loss for a reply, and had most powerful arguments at command. He drew his sword,
and

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and laying hold of *Kindius*, son to *Sigurd*, “ declared in the most
“ determined manner, that he would hew the youth in pieces, if
“ the earl hesitated a moment longer about adopting the Christian
“ faith: and added, that this should be but an earnest of the fate
“ of every one who refused to adopt the principles of that religion
“ which he had embraced.—Whereas the earl, by his compliance,
“ would not only enter into a more sacred and honourable al-
“ liance with the crown of *Norway*; but, as the revelation was
“ immediately from God, would, by accepting it, secure a state
“ of happiness in the immortal world.”

ANY further obstinacy would have involved *Sigurd* and his adherents in instant and irremediable distress. He was prevailed on to become Christian, consented to be baptized, and to sign a proclamation, that all his subjects should follow his example. In consequence of this, *Olaus* ratified a solemn treaty of friendship with him, in which it was particularly stipulated, that, for the more effectual establishment of Christianity, *Sigurd* was to give honourable protection to all those holy men, who might choose to reside in those parts for the purpose of instructing the people in the nature of the Christian doctrines; and for his fidelity in fulfilling that part of the engagement, *Olaus* took *Kindius* along with him as an hostage. Many of the more intelligent and religious men who had come from *Norway* with *Olaus*, remained in the *Orcades* and in the north of *Scotland*, to fulfil their pious resolution of spreading the light of the gospel there. *Olaus*, with the rest of his followers, sailed on another expedition towards the firth of *Moray*.

THE armament landed to refresh at *Eccialbacca* (or the fort of *Burghead*.) Some colonies were detached thence under the command of an experienced leader, *Enetus*, either on a foraging party, or to make a settlement on the rich banks of the firth of *Dornoch*. But *Alane*, thane of *Sutherland*, and his chieftains, came down on the invaders with a numerous army, and their success proved, that either their courage, force, or discipline, was superior to that of their opponents ; for, after an obstinate engagement, the *Norwegian* lines gave way, and the whole detachment was drove in confusion to their vessels. This is said to have been the last attempt of these foreigners to make settlements in that country. Soon after that event, *Olaus* returned to *Norway*; and *Kindius*, whom he had taken along with him, died. Thence, *Sigurd* considered himself as freed from all his engagements with the court of *Norway*; and entered into a treaty with *Malcolm II*. 1009.

IN consequence of the treaty, *Sigurd* received a daughter of *Malcolm's* in marriage, and had by her a son and heir named *Torphinus*, whose education was committed to the care of the king; and while he was yet but a youth, his father engaged in an unfortunate expedition to *Ireland*, where he fell in battle, much lamented by his countrymen. 1020.

ON the day of that battle, the famous prodigy of the *Destinies* is said to have been seen in *Caithness*. *Daradus*, a native of the country, is reported to have seen twelve gigantic figures, resembling women, ride full speed into the side of a hill; a daring curiosity led him to the place, and looking through an opening among some rocks, he saw the spectres employed about a loom; and while they "wove the web of death," sung a dreadful song,

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song*, "how low the dauntless earl was laid." Of that song Mr. Gray has formed his beautiful Ode; which, as it represents the formidable manner in which the Fates announced in *Caithness* the fall of its celebrated earl, *Sigurd*, may be properly referred to on this occasion.

SECTION IV.

1030.

TORPHINUS was created earl of *Caithness* and *Sutherland*, by a charter from *Malcolm*, and maintained his rank and authority with dignity and in peace, until the death of that monarch.

1038.

By his successor, tribute was demanded of *Torphinus*, as an acknowledgment of his dependance on the crown of *Scotland*. The earl thought, that the grant of such a demand was altogether unsuitable to the spirit of that independant power of which he was possessed; and refused to court the favour of the crown of *Scotland* on any such humiliating terms. In consequence of this declaration being made known, a nobleman, whose name was *Moddan*, was created earl of *Caithness* and *Sutherland* in his stead.

MODDAN advanced north, levying war against *Torphinus*, and with the show of acting by royal authority, attached a number of the chieftains in *Sutherland* to his interests, and approached *Caithness* with a formidable retinue.

TORPHINUS, however, had been apprised of his motions, had the frontiers of *Caithness* well defended by a numerous army, and

* *Bartholinus Antiq. Danic.* 617.

was every way well prepared to repulse his attacks. *Moddan*, finding that he should meet with such a stout resistance, after he had assembled his forces on the borders of *Caithness*, began to retreat with them through *Sutherland*. Soon as *Torphinus* was apprised of this, he precipitated his flight into *Ross-shire*, by pursuing him with a choice body of men; and, after chastising some of the clans, who had shown the greatest tendency to revolt, returned into *Caithness* in quiet.

TORPHINUS, however, was not without his suspicions, that *Moddan*, being a powerful nobleman, protected and encouraged by the government, would return in some more advantageous circumstances, with a view to ascertain his right to the earldom, and take possession of *Caithness*. He therefore was at much pains in perfecting the discipline of his army, strengthened his castles on the frontiers and promontories, and prepared a number of vessels to oppose any naval force which his rival might bring against him.

MODDAN, in the mean time, had not been idle; he had gained over numbers to support his cause; and marched north with a much larger force. The crown assisted him in fitting out a fleet of eleven vessels, equipped in the warlike manner of the times; one *Carl* had the command of the squadron; and a time was appointed for his making a descent on the coast of *Caithness*, when *Moddan* should attempt to penetrate into it by land.

TORPHINUS heard of the fleet's advancing. His ships were only five in number; these, however, he manned with the flower of his warriors, and sailed to intercept the enemy.

WHEN the fleets approached, the superiority of the enemy's vessels, both as to size and number, was evident to all: *Torphinus*

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himself felt it : but animated his warriors by a most spirited address, and strengthened their bravery as they advanced to the charge. " Our valour," says he, " must supply the place of numbers, and inspire the hope of success :—the sense of honour banish all apprehension of danger. Let us surprize them by the boldness of our attack, and they shall fall into disorder, from whence they will never recover." The event was answerable to his most sanguine expectations.

WHEN their fleets approached each other to battle, the line was formed abreast, by lashing the ships with ropes side by side together. The warriors were arranged on the prows of each. Soon after the first flight of javelins and arrows, and the fleets were come close together, *Torphinus* took the standard of his own galley in his hand, and jumped with a shout of triumph into the admiral's ship ; his warriors followed him with loudest acclamations, and, confounding the enemy, drove them from their stations. This daring and resolute procedure, threw *Carl's* whole squadron into confusion ; the crew of the admiral's ship fled for safety into the adjoining vessels, and, cutting the ropes which bound the fleet together, allowed them to be scattered, leaving the principal ship in *Torphinus's* possession. And such was the dismay in *Carl's* fleet, occasioned by this event, that they did not return to the fight ; but, leaving the command of the sea, and the joy of an almost bloodless victory, to *Torphinus*, sailed inoffensively back along the coast, into the firth of *Moray*.

DURING the time, however, that *Torphinus* was engaged in defeating the attack meditated against him by sea, *Moddan*, with his land-forces, had penetrated into the heart of *Caitbness*; and, ere the earl was prepared to give him battle, had advanced near

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to *Thurso*. He had not, however, met in *Caithness* with any favourable reception; and not being joined by any powerful chieftain, was under the necessity of supporting his forces by depredation and plunder, and became extremely obnoxious to the inhabitants. They had cause to wish, that such a race of spoilers might be extirpated. *Moddan*, therefore, not only found much difficulty in foraging, but could obtain no faithful accounts of the movements of *Torpinus's* army. The earl also was an overmatch for him by his superior knowledge of the country; he came upon him unawares; his guard were taken by surprise: *Moddan* was made a captive in the night-time, and beheaded ere the morning. The chief part of his followers and soldiers, when they were apprized of his fate, struck with terror and consternation, surrendered prisoners of war, the rest fled to the mountains and escaped into *Sutherland*. *Torpinus* greatly rejoiced at this stroke, so additionally fortunate as to have given him a second victory without the loss of any of his men. The attachment which the country had shown to him, by keeping at the utmost distance from his rival—the evidences he had seen of the fidelity and intrepidity of his troops, and his firm establishment, no less in the hearts of the people than in the earldom—greatly elated him. He prepared a very splendid and costly entertainment for his numerous vassals. It was a feast of triumph and honour to his principal warriors; and of luxurious carousal to the multitude. It lasted many days.

THE eminent success of *Torpinus* in the late contest, his magnificent hospitality to the chieftains and soldiers, and his generosity to all who claimed his protection, increased his influ-

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ence and authority; his fame and power daily gaining ground, soon extended over all the *Orcades*; and, for several years, he ruled uncontrouled over those extensive territories.

BUT the celebrated *Sigurd* had left a grandson, named *Ronald*, a young man of distinguished abilities: he having gone over to *Norway*, attended at the court there, and taking part in the exploits of the princes, became remarkable for his feats of activity and valour. He was esteemed as heir to the earldom of *Orkney*; gained the attachment of the king; and was offered by *Magnus* vessels and arms, if he chose to head a force and strive to make good his claim.

RONALD's ambition was equal to this high encouragement: possessed of native penetration and address, he exhibited the enterprize in such flattering lights, that he persuaded many young men of considerable influence to accompany him with their followers, and to seek their fortunes in the islands. They made a successful descent in the *Orcades*, and soon began to enjoy the emoluments of the high rank and power which they assumed.

JUST at this period, a nobleman, whose name was *Armin*, one who had filled some of the first places next the throne in *Norway*, being accused of some faithless proceedings, and seeing a storm gathering, and ready to burst upon his head, resolved on a voluntary but honourable exile. He sailed with a considerable armament from *Norway*, and landed with great pomp in *Caitness*, as the friend and ally of *Torpin*; offering to assist him in driving *Ronald* from the *Orcades*, and hoping to share in the honours of that earldom.

WHILE preparations were making in *Caitness* to invest the islands, an embassy came from *Magnus* to *Armin*, promising to receive

receive him again into the royal favour, if he would join *Ronald* with his armament, and help to defend the *Orcades* from the attack meditated by *Torphinus*. But although this message considerably cooled his zeal for the enterprize; yet the power of which he knew *Torphinus* to be possessed; the vast fleet, and number of forces, which he saw ready to be sent forth against *Ronald*; determined him to preserve a neutrality for the present.

TORPHINUS collected his whole naval force together, which, in great and small, consisted of sixty vessels. On board of these, his whole army embarked, and he launched into the *Pent-land-firth*. There he was met by *Ronald's* squadron, which was only thirty in number, but far superior in size to the ships commanded by *Torphinus*. The fleets formed the line of battle. The sixty vessels belonging to *Torphinus*, all fastened side by side together, formed a noble phalanx; but the superior height of *Ronald's* ships gave his warriors a vast advantage; the archers threw their darts with greater violence and a surer aim. The ship in which *Torphinus* commanded in person, was the only one of his fleet of equal size to the first rate of the enemy; so that he found, although the warriors in his own ship supported the fight on equal terms, yet those on either hand, oppressed by their disadvantageous situation, were sinking under the weight of the enemy's weapons descending from above. He therefore gave the signal for a retreat, ordered the vessels to be loosened, and retired to *Thurso* bay. *Ronald's* squadron kept their place, and preserved the line entire.

TORPHINUS had become sensible, that without the aid of six lofty ships, which *Arminius* had under his command, he could
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not be on an equal footing with *Ronald*; and therefore, in the most serious manner, applied to *Arminius* to come with his squadron to his aid, " adjuring him, by the friendship and protection " which he had experienced at his hand, to support him at " this critical moment; promising, in consequence of their success, to devolve upon him the government of the isles." *Arminius*, inspired by this hope, and flattered by the so honourable sollicitation from *Torphinus*, joined him with the utmost alacrity. The large vessels were manned with the most resolute and experienced of their followers; a new disposition of the fleet was made; and they advanced to a second attack on *Ronald's* squadron. *Torphinus* was resolved that this action should be decisive. With a truly heroic solemnity, he left *Arnor*, his bard, on the shore, that there, on an eminence, an undisturbed witness of the fight, he might celebrate the fortunes of the day, and immortalize his memory, whatever might be his fate *.

TORPHINUS now commanding ships of at least an equal size with those of *Ronald*; and knowing the very singular importance of the advantageous terms on which the warriors in the lofty vessels encountered them that were arranged in those of inferior size;

* The bards often attended the army to the field of battle, to animate the soldiers to valiant deeds. *Bartholinus*, in his *Causæ contemptæ mortis a Danis*, 178, preserves one of the antient hymns on an occasion of this kind.—In like manner, the *Welsh* bards attended and poured out their song, to inspire their countrymen in the hour of conflict.

See Mr. *PENNANT's* Tour in *Wales*, p. 471.

made his first attack on that wing of the enemy's fleet, where the smaller vessels were formed. They, unable to support the unequal combat, gave way, and broke the line, to save themselves from instant destruction. The other wing, observing the line broke through, and fearing lest they should be surrounded, began to retire; and, in a little time, *Ronald* in the center was left, with but a very few ships to support him. He fought, however, with undaunted resolution, and kept his station till the close of day; when observing the greatest part of his fleet either shattered, dispersed, or taken, he gave up his cause as lost; and, without so much as touching in *Orkney*, sailed directly for *Norway*.

TORPHINUS thus at last triumphed also over *Ronald*. But seems either to have dreaded the resentment of *Magnus* king of *Norway*, or to have been most anxiously solicitous to know his resolutions, in consequence of the late event; for he tried a most dangerous expedient to obtain an audience and force a reconciliation with the king. Nothing but great intrepidity and bravery of mind could have been equal to the exploit. He sailed for *Norway* with two of his finest galleys only: on his arrival there, he found that *Magnus* was embarked on an expedition to *Denmark* and was detained by contrary winds in a harbour of *Systerland*. *Torphinus* came into that port, and, without any previous intimation, went aboard the royal galley; and being cloathed in a white robe, that none might interrupt him (for such seems to have been the privilege of those who were devoted to the culture of *Christianity* at that period) went directly into the great cabin, where *Magnus* sat at dinner; and as a protestation

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testation and seal of friendship, eat of the bread that was before the king: *Magnus*, in return, offered his cup to the stranger, begging to be informed on what errand he had come, and who it was that thus accosted him. *Torphinus* discovered himself. The earl of *Caithness* was not beheld without astonishment on this occasion. With manly deference he addressed himself to the king, " begged pardon for the opposition he had " given to the late equipment from *Norway*. He wished " well to the nation: but every principle of honour called " on him to defend his estate from all encroachments; but, " to testify his regard for *Magnus*, and zeal for his prosperity, " was ready to join the fleet, and second the enterprizes of the " king."

MAGNUS felt equal pleasure and admiration, at the boldness and magnanimity shown in this offer of friendship, and cordially accepted of the alliance and aid of so experienced a commander, highly satisfied that *Torphinus* should take part in his expedition against the *Danes*.

BUT this mutual confidence was of no long continuance.

MANY of those who courted the favour of *Magnus*, saw a formidable rival in *Torphinus*. They traduced him to the king, as practising insidious designs; and found witnesses to declare that he never favoured any who were attached to the crown of *Norway*. He perceived the king's friendship fluctuate, and that suspicion often darkened his brow. And, not choosing to trust farther to the uncertain consequences of the jealousy which he saw had begun, without any previous notice, he quitted the fleet, and, with as little ceremony as he had come, set sail again

in his gallies for *Scotland*: and for several years protected his shores in quiet.

MAGNUS died. Soon as *Torphinus* understood that *Harold* had ascended the throne of *Norway*, he renewed his offer of forming an alliance with that state. His ambassadors met with a favourable reception, and returned with an entreaty that *Torphinus* would come over in person, and spend some time with *Harold*. He accordingly manned two gallies, each of twenty seats, and with a hundred attendants sailed for *Norway*. *Harold* entertained him in the most splendid manner, and they ratified a league of friendship. From *Norway*, *Torphinus* went into *Denmark*, visited *Suenus*, and formed terms of peace and alliance with him; and was entertained in a like flattering and honourable way.

By these treaties, having the prospect that his territories would remain quiet and secure; his mind having been much harrassed by continual engagement in desperate enterprizes; and entering into the spirit of religion prevalent in that age; he resolved to go to *Rome*, and receive absolution from the papal chair. From the *Baltic*, he took his route through *Saxony*, was countenanced by the emperor *Henry*, and received from him a set of horses to facilitate his journey into *Italy*.

HAVING performed this pilgrimage, and received the wished-for absolution, he returned to *Caithness* full of peaceful thoughts, and was fortunate enough to spend the rest of his years in tranquillity. In these he became no less eminent for establishing salutary laws, and encouraging the arts of industry,

than he had formerly been distinguished by military fame, and success in the exploits of war.

He lived to an advanced age, until after *Malcolm III.* had ascended the throne of *Scotland*.

1064.

TORPHINUS had built a sumptuous church in *Byrfa*, where the first bishops of *Orkney* resided. In the decline of life, he retired to that island, and, finishing his days with exemplary piety, was with much solemnity interred in the temple which he had raised. His country long lamented the loss of so celebrated a ruler, who had established security in it, through the influence of his laws, and had taught it to enjoy the arts and blessings of peace.

S E C T I O N V.

1100.

PAUL and *Erland*, the sons of *Torphinus*, through the whole of their lives amicably shared both in the honours and administration of their father's extensive domain. During this period, the northern counties are said to have arrived at a very superior degree of cultivation and improvement, which became equally conspicuous in the richness of their lands, and in the mildness of their dispositions.

BUT the sons of *Paul* and *Erland* did not equally inherit their father's virtues. *Magnus*, the son of *Erland*, destined to be canonized, was quiet, generous, serious, friendly, fond of retirement and of knowledge. *Hacon*, the heir of *Paul*, was vehement, wild, and impetuous in his temper, impatient of restraint, and could not bear to see a rival of his power and honour

nour in a younger brother's son. The songs which celebrated the glorious exploits of his ancestors in war, roused up his soul to warlike enterprizes. He became dreaded for his daring piracies on the seas; and at home, his ferocity and savage conduct to his brothers, servants, and vassals, awoke formidable apprehensions of the broils in which he would involve his country. His father endeavoured, with paternal affection and authority, to reform his manners; *Erland* made every concession that could tend to pacify him; *Magnus* overlooked his insults, and strove to ingratiate himself into *Hacon's* favour; but in vain. At length, however, his relations contrived to divert the wild genius of *Hacon* into an useful channel. They met in council, and represented it to him as a matter of the first importance to his renown, that he should go abroad, see the manners of other countries, learn the arts of war, and the laws of government. *Hacon* acquiesced with this proposal, equipped a galley, and sailing over to the continent, visited *Denmark* and *Sweden*; and long supported a military character among the chiefs of *Norway*, conducting the armaments of that nation.

MAGNUS, in the mean time, with undisturbed devotion, indulged the worthiest amusements of leisure and quiet: was indefatigable in his researches after knowledge, in particular that of sacred writ; and, that he might become the more thoroughly acquainted with the nature of the evangelical doctrines, went round by sea to *Jona*, where the light of Christianity was held to be more fully displayed. There, and on the adjacent coasts of *Scotland*, he was a long while conversant with the

ecclesiastics; and, carested and recommended by several bishops, was, on his return to *Caitbness*, received with the highest marks of veneration and esteem.

MAGNUS took great concern in the establishments for Christian worship, and patronized the *Roman* missionaries. He was no less attentive to the culture of piety and good affections in his own breast, than to promote the genuine influence of every sacred institution: and while he advanced the interests of the church, showed a generous concern in every regulation that could tend to secure the tranquillity and happiness of his country. By these means the hearts of the people were devoted to *Magnus*; all ranks looked up to him as a patron of the just and good, and who promised to be a ruler equally respected and beloved.

HACON learned how highly his countrymen admired the character of *Magnus*, how much they were attached to him: and, stung with the reflection, meditated his destruction. Having all along practised the arts of war, in piracies and playing the freebooter among the western isles, he had considerable armaments perpetually under his command, and came home declaring, that he despised his brother's peaceful virtues, and was determined to assert his superiority over *Magnus* by force of arms.

WHILE arrangements were evidently making every where for that purpose, the chieftains observed, with the deepest concern, what a cloud was gathering over their quiet days, and held the most solemn meetings to dispel the rising storm: *Hacon* was, by their mediation, prevailed upon to enter on conciliatory measures with *Magnus*.

It was agreed upon, that the chiefs, each attended with a certain number of select friends, should hold a conference, in which the separate provinces and boundaries of their authority and power should be settled, and a league of friendship established in the most sacred manner: the place appointed was the island of *Eglisba*.

To give additional solemnity to the treaty, it was to be held in *Easter-week*. All parties expected to celebrate, with much joy, the fortunate result of this approaching agreement.

MAGNUS, accompanied with a number of the most intelligent and experienced of his friends, sailed according to appointment, with two ships only, and was early at the island, deliberating with his counsellors on the terms that were now to bring the threatened disturbances to an end. But while they were enjoying the hopes of the lasting peace that would ensue, a numerous fleet appeared; and as they drew towards the shore, but little doubt remained, that *Hacon* had resolved to put a fatal period to their consultations.

MAGNUS saw he was betrayed; and every means of safety cut off but expostulation and prayer. To these he trusted his cause, and ordered mass to be celebrated. *Hacon's* fleet, full of armed men, soon invested the island; they landed with every hostile appearance, and surrounded the church with drawn swords. *Magnus*, defenceless and unarmed, came forth among them. He intreated *Hacon* to spare his life, and he would resign the title of earl solely to him. It was not enough. He asked for banishment, and promised to live a perpetual exile: but it was not permitted. He implored *Hacon* to put out his eyes, or in-

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flit whatever punishments he pleased, but not condemn him to immediate death. All intreaty was vain. *Hacon*, with horrible deliberation, ordered *Magnus* to be beheaded; indulging him only in one, his last request—leisure to compose himself in prayer ere the hatchet fell.

1120.

By this dreadful stroke, *Hacon* spread an universal terror among the friends of *Magnus*. Intimidated by his daring procedures, they submitted to his sway. Seeing all their hopes in their favourite lord irrecoverably extinguished, they were easily prevailed on to take an oath of fealty to *Hacon*; and he was acknowledged earl and superior, both of the northern counties of *Scotland* and of the *Orkney* islands. The highest aim of his ambition being now accomplished; and finding that he ruled uncontrouled, he turned his attention to the encreasing riches and prosperity of his country: it is said he enacted several laws, whereby the freedom and privileges of the people were enlarged, and additional encouragements given to their progress and diligence in agriculture and in arts.

He often indulged himself in the antient practice of hunting, during the summer season, among the mountains of *Strathnaver*. In the parish of *Tongue*, there is a lake still called by his name: in the lake there is an island, where he had a hunting-house, of which there are remains, and the island is called *Illan-lochan-bacon*.

In the decline of life he became very devout and serious, and called to remembrance, with sorrow, the violences he had done, and the blood-shed he had occasioned in his earlier years: and, in the spirit of the then prevalent superstition, resolved on a pil-

grimage to *Jerusalem*, on purpose that he might wash himself in the river *Jordan*, and shed the tears of repentance in the *holy sepulchre*, if possible to soften the poignancy of these bitter recollections that haunted him. Having fulfilled his vow, he returned with a quieter mind, and a great character of sanctity; and having brought many holy relicks along with him, these heightened the veneration of his countrymen for their earl: and he is much celebrated for having governed his territories, all the remainder of his life, with much clemency, equity, and wisdom. He died ere the middle of the twelfth century, while *David I.* was king of *Scotland*.

HACON'S equitable and generous administration in the last years of his life, whereby he strove to compensate for his former errors, made his death to be regretted, and his memory long held in respect.

BUT the circumstances in which *Magnus* was so untimely cut off, and the flattering prospects that by his means seemed to be opening on his country, conspired to secure to him a more lasting monument of fame. His death was considered as a martyrdom. His probity and piety, his love of truth and knowledge, the patronage he had so affectionately shown to the *Roman* missionaries, and the liberality wherewith he had supported their establishments, made his name to be celebrated by the religious orders, with a sacred veneration. Representations were sent to *Rome* of the great respect and so distinguished regard which *Magnus* had shown to the church and catholic institutions. In consequence of these he was canonized: and for a number of years, many wonders were said and believed to

to have been seen, many cures performed, at the shrine of *Saint Magnus*.

SEVERAL churches, erected to his memory in the north, still retain his name.

S E C T I O N VI.

1136,

HACON left two sons, by different mothers: one named *Paul* the *Silent*, the other *Harold* the *Orator*. *Harold's* mother was daughter to a chief who had large possessions and great influence in *Caithness*; her brother had gained the title and authority of the count of *Thurso*: *Harold* was therefore, by his means, supported as the heir of *Hacon*, in *Caithness*: *Paul* took possession of the government of the *Orcades*. But they were jealous of each other's power. Their projects and interests interfered: animosities and feuds prevailed between the chieftains that were attached to each; and these contentions were continually on the eve of breaking forth into avowed hostilities, and the desperate enterprizes of declared war.

It was therefore proposed, by the more prudent of their friends, that they should meet to settle their differences; and a feast of reconciliation was appointed to be held at *Christmas*. The chiefs agreed to confirm a federal bond of union; and mutually gave public entertainments, as an open profession of their friendship.

WHILE they were holding one of the banquets, *Harold* accidentally stepped into an apartment, where his mother, and an artful woman,

woman, his aunt, were busy at their needles, and he found they had been embroidering a shirt of very fine linen. On enquiry, for whom so rich a piece of dress was intended, he was informed, that it was designed for *Paul*. *Hacon* was enraged at the thoughts of this preference. They gave indirect insinuations that ought to have pacified him; but his reason was lost in the tumult of passion, and he tore it from them:—they called heaven to witness, that it would be death to the wearer; but he, with fatal resentment, declared, that none should wear it but himself; and, notwithstanding his mother's most earnest entreaty and tears, carried it away. The shirt was deeply poisoned, and *Hacon* fell a victim to the rash indulgence of his inconsiderate pride and vanity; leaving *Paul*, for whom it had been designed, sole sovereign of the country.

FRAQUARK, and the mother of *Harold*, overwhelmed with vexation and sorrow, and alarmed with apprehensions what the consequences of this fatal event might be, fled into the heart of *Sutherland*, and took up their residence in a sequestered castle, to wait the issues of fortune *.

PAUL now concerted measures for the more effectually establishing his influence and authority over *Caitbness*: he found,

* By *Torfæus*'s account of this asylum, it was an edifice built in an extremely wild situation. He mentions that it was placed on a rock, the access to it by dreary and gloomy paths, amidst crags, and fens, and forests. In the XIIIth. Letter there is mention made of circular towers, the only kind of castles of which there are remains in these parts, and their situation corresponds with the above: perhaps this may have been among the last times that any of these were inhabited; and it is now, since that period, betwixt six and seven hundred years.

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EXTRACTS FROM

however, that it must be done by force of arms; and made war-like preparations for that purpose. But his military talents were called forth to be exercised in another channel. A storm was gathering, that threatened the total overthrow of all his power.

A DESCENDANT of *Saint Magnus*, appeared at the court of *Norway*. This young man's name was *Ronald*, no less distinguished by the elegance of his form, than by the extensive capacity of his soul, and engaging manners; he conciliated the attachment of the princes, and was a favourite with the king. His strength and activity were no less remarkable, than his knowledge and experience of all the arts and sciences which were in vogue. A poem is preserved, in which nine of his excellencies are particularly celebrated;—how well he could read; understood the *Runic* characters; played at chess; was a musician; composed extemporary poems; he excelled in archery; could dexterously manage the oar; skate with wooden shoes upon the snow; and work in wood and iron. By these accomplishments, he not only gained the civic wreath, but offered fair for military fame. As heir to *Saint Magnus*, he was nominated an earl by the king, and bid to seek the possession of his hereditary fortune. He received a present of a royal galley, well manned and equipped. Several commanders, of considerable influence, encouraged his aspiring views: many adventurers were eager to join the armament; and he soon found himself commander of a fleet of six vessels full of warriors, and of six others as tenders or victualling ships.

ERE *Ronald* advanced with this armament, he sent messengers to *Paul*, offering to share the government of the islands in a friendly manner with him: but *Paul* treated the messengers with great haughtiness and contempt. *Ronald* had apprehended this; and, in consequence of such an event, instructed his emissaries to go into *Caithness*, and there publish his authority, and his claim as the heir of *Magnus*, and to announce that he was coming over to reward all those who were found inspired with respect for the memory of that great MARTYR.

FRAQUARK and the mother of *Harold* had formed, by this time, very important connections in the west of *Scotland*. They were fortunate enough, in that *Madanus*, earl of *Athol*, had married their niece, a daughter of the celebrated *Hacon's*. By this connection, *Madanus* had a son, whom he wished to advance to power and fortune in the north. The present was esteemed a favourable opportunity of forwarding their design. They carested *Ronald's* ambassadors, and promised to be in force to support him, providing that the youth, whose name was *Harold*, should come under his tuition, and when of age, share with *Ronald* in the government of the northern counties.

ON the return of the messengers to *Norway*, *Ronald*, greatly encouraged by the prospect of the succours which that confederacy would procure him, inspired his followers with the highest expectations of success: and, to add religious dignity to the enterprize, called many of the chiefs together, and in their presence made a solemn vow, "that if they prospered, he would build a magnificent church, and dedicate it to *Saint Magnus*." On his protection he rested their cause, and doubt-

ed "not of the most fortunate issue to crown their expedition, undertaken with such laudable and pious views." The commanders and sailors testified their approbation of the voyage, by repeated acclamations; every one was satisfied with the undertaking; and, full of hope, the fleet set sail.

PAUL, in the mean time, had strengthened his fortresses and castles, and made every warlike preparation for the defence and security of his coasts. He had been particularly attentive to measures for giving the fullest effect to the antient custom of communicating intelligence of the appearance of an enemy, from mountain to mountain, and from island to island, by fires. Knowing their importance, his instructions, with respect to these, had been enforced with particular care. *Ronald* had learned this, or at least his penetration suggested it; and it occurred to him, as a matter of very essential moment, if he could perplex *Paul* by those very means wherewith he so judiciously consulted his safety. He therefore, ere the fleet came in sight of land, published an offer of large premiums, to any who would undertake to defeat the effect of that alarm and signal to arms which was given by the fires.

AN old inhabitant of *Orkney*, an experienced seaman, offered his service. He begged of *Ronald* to land, with the large ships at *Zetland*, and refresh his forces there, while he, with the lighter vessels, would give a false alarm to the *Orcades*. This was agreed to: the gallies were rowed within sight of the *Orkney* islands at day-break: there, for some time, they lay upon their oars. By and by they raised the sails of the vessels a little, to suggest the idea of approach: gradually through the day

day they continued this deception, and gave the appearance of loftier vessels drawing nigh : ere evening, by the time the sails were hoisted to the mast-head, they seemed a very formidable fleet : and this appearance, aided by the apprehensions of the islanders, made the stratagem take its full and desired effect. The fires were kindled.

ON the appointed alarm being given, the chieftains assembled ; all ranks flocked together to defend their country from invasion.

NEXT day, to their astonishment, no fleet appeared. Every one having left his domestic concerns, and got under arms, zealous to defend his inheritance, was flushed with the hope of making the invaders dearly pay for such an encroachment on their peace : but, when no enemy was to be found, they remained in the most painful state of suspense and consternation. They saw, that by some fatal error, they had been imposed on, and their watchmen deceived. They were disconcerted, mutinied, and hardly without bloodshed, returned every man to his home.

ANOTHER expedient proved equally favourable to *Ronald's* cause. A single boat's crew was sent from *Zetland* to *Fara*, the nearest of the *Orkney* islands. They pretended to have been drove from their houses by the adventurers from *Norway*, and had come to seek for shelter and a settlement among the inhabitants of *Orkney*, and to warn them of their danger. They so far ingratiated themselves with the people of *Fara*, by their readiness in executing every office in which they could be serviceable, that there remained no suspicion that they could have
come

EXTRACTS FROM

come with a fraudulent design. Yet, at every dark and quiet hour, these artful emissaries so thoroughly drenched the piles of wood with water, which were intended to be kindled as the signal of an approaching enemy, that when *Ronald's* squadron in reality appeared, no art could make them burn; nor could they in time collect to the mountain-tops a sufficient quantity of fuel to give the appointed alarm.

By these prudent and artful measures *Ronald* gained, without any material opposition, a full possession of many of the isles, and soon, in point of influence and power among them, was on an equal footing with *Paul*, whom he from time to time amused with various proposals of peace. By the mediation of a bishop, a suspension of arms was agreed on between them, to continue fourteen days. That quiet became finally fatal to *Paul*.

SUENUS, a man of daring spirit and of great sagacity, who had a number of warlike followers in *Caitbness*, and resided in *Freswick* castle, engaged with *Madanus* and *Fraquark*, that he would bring *Paul* to them a captive. This, if accomplished, was the most certain means of fulfilling all their wishes: they therefore gave him the amplest encouragements to be steady in the enterprize.

SUENUS sailed in a galley, with thirty chosen men, and came to the island of *Rausa*, where *Paul* was residing. When he came near the coast, he concealed the greatest part of his men; and acquainted the fishing-boats which he met with, that, having provisions to dispose of, he was desirous of knowing where the earl might be found, who, he was convinced, would be well
satisfied

fatisfied to be the purchaser. In the course of these enquiries, he found that the earl was hunting seals*, in the vast caves that lie under the great promontory at the end of the island.

THIS was too favourable an opportunity of carrying his scheme into execution, to be neglected by *Suenus*: he landed his men upon the adjacent shore, so as to cut off the earl's retreat from the caves; and with a resolute party fell at once upon his attendants, and cut the most of them to pieces. *Paul* thus surprized, at a period when he was altogether unsuspecting of danger, and left utterly defenceless, and at a distance from every possible succour, was compelled to yield to his severe destiny: he was bound, and put aboard of *Suenus's* galley, and by him carried a prisoner into *Sutherland*. There, kept in close confinement, and under perpetual apprehension of death, he found the only means of warding off the impending stroke, was to make over to young *Harold* his title to the earldom: he therefore formally resigned to him every right and claim to fortune or authority in the north.

HAROLD being thus appointed the legal heir of *Paul*, in consequence of that earl's disposition in his favour, superadded to the former terms of agreement with *Ronald*, his right to rule was judged equally valid, and that therefore his authority should be equally extensive. To this *Ronald* had no objection.

* See Mr. PENNANT's account of the manner of hunting and killing them, Tour 1769, p. 183. and Br. Zool. I. N° 37.

EXTRACTS FROM

HAROLD went over to *Orkney*, under the care of *John* bishop of *Atbol*, and agreed with *Ronald*, that a solemn league of friendship, alliance, and perpetual amity should be established between them. Of this public notice was given throughout the *Orcades* and *Caithness*: the chieftains were appointed to assemble at the castle of *Thurso*. There a bond of union was ratified, corresponding with the agreement of the earls; and it was declared, "that *Ronald* and *Harold* should be joint partners in the "government of all these territories, and entitled to all the "authority and lands, of which their grandfathers *Hacon* and "Saint *Magnus* had been heirs."

THESE earls, in an amicable manner, long ruled the north with honour and tranquillity.

1158.

It was customary for them to spend part of the summer in hunting wild goats and roes among the mountains of *Strathnaver*. *Ronald* was there assassinated by *Tbiorbiornus*, a chieftain who had thought himself insulted. The highest funeral honours were paid to *Ronald*. He was carried in pomp from *Thurso* to the temple of the holy virgin in *South-Ronaldsha*, and buried there.

HAROLD now fully possessed the unrivalled sovereignty of the north, and lived long to enjoy it. We find, that in 1196, he was able to bring seven thousand men to the field, and a body of cavalry, against the army of *William* king of *Scotland*; but was immediately defeated. In the next year, the *Caithnessians* rebelled again, headed by one *Roderic*, and *Torphinus*, son to *Harold*. The king met and defeated them near *Inverness*. *Roderic* was slain; and *William*, seizing on *Harold* in the extremity of *Caithness*,

detained him till *Torphinus* surrendered himself as a hostage; but, on some new treasons of the father, the king, according to the barbarity of the times, caused the eyes of the unhappy youth to be put out; and had him emasculated, of which he soon perished in prison *.

HAROLD died in the seventy-third year of his age; and with him ended, in its earls, the independent sovereignty of the north of *Scotland*.

1206.

C O N C L U S I O N.

HAVING thus run over the principal events recorded by *Torfæus*, they are found extending through a period of four hundred years, from the beginning of the ninth to the end of the twelfth century: and serve to give a summary view of the state of these provinces, the condition of the inhabitants, and the various fortunes of some of the principal characters, in these distant ages. Previous to the year eight hundred, nothing seems to be known of what passed in this country. But it is more remarkable, that so little satisfactory can be gleaned of its history since the year one thousand two hundred. Soon as the light from *Torfæus* fails, we are presented with a great blank in the northern story. Darkness and oblivion, in a great measure, prevail. The court of *Norway* being no longer interested in the revolutions of the earldom, after it became annexed to

* *Annals of Scotl.* I. 135.

CONFLICTS OF

the crown of *Scotland*, the appointment of historiographers in *Flora* would cease: and whatever civil commotions might shake these northern counties, the internal convulsions of such distant provinces, howsoever severe, would be but little felt at the seat of government, and, consequently, overlooked in the records of the nation. Nothing but fragments of distressful and gloomy events, can be learned of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. In these, frequent feud and rapine seem to have laid waste the borders of *Strathnaver*, *Caitness*, and *Sutherland*. Some depredations and conflicts, that happened in the sixteenth century, are related with greater precision. Perhaps it may not be improper, that some of these, though unimportant, should be mentioned.

THE following anecdotes are supported by the additional evidence of a small volume, written in the reign of *James VI.* and may be called, as it is,

CONFLICTS OF THE CLANS.

1517. *Y. ROY-M'KAY* was a celebrated chieftain of *Strathnaver*. This clan made frequent depredations on the borders of *Caitness* and *Sutherland*. A very formidable body of them, joined by numbers from *Affint*, and by a troop from the wild and mountainous regions of *Edracbills*, took an opportunity of invading *Sutherland*, when the earl was at *Edinburgh*, attending on *James V.* The chieftains of *Sutherland*, however, assembled their vassals, and gathering together their whole force, fell upon the invaders at *Terrandow*, in the parish of *Rogart*, and put them

them to flight: two hundred and sixteen of the *Strathnaver* party fell in the field, the rest escaped to their mountains. Eighteen of the *Sutherland* men were slain in the fight.

YEAR after year, in like manner, these highland freebooters hovered on the borders, often spoiling the country.

QUEEN MARY came to *Inverness*, and issued an order, summoning an *T. Roy-M'Kay* to appear before her, that he might answer for disturbances and bloodshed, which he had caused, by heading these outlaws in their depredations on *Sutherland*: but he refused to obey the royal mandate, and strengthened himself in the castle of *Boorve*, a fortress placed on a peninsulated and almost inaccessible rock on the north coast of *Strathnaver*. The earl of *Sutherland* was therefore commissioned to penetrate north with a considerable force, and with positive orders to apprehend *T. Roy*, and bring him captive to the queen. The earl successfully executed the office committed to his charge. Advancing through a tract of almost desert mountains, he besieged the castle of *Boorve*, and compelled it to a surrender. The fort was demolished, and *T. Roy* carried a prisoner to *Edinburgh* castle, and there held in close confinement.

THE clan, in revenge for this dishonour done to their chief, came down with redoubled rage and violence, and laid waste the country of *Sutherland* wherever they came. They set fire to the chapel of *St. Ninian* in *Navisdale*, and consumed it to the ground, thereby also destroying a large quantity of goods, which the neighbouring inhabitants had conveyed into it, as the place of greatest safety. The plunderers, however, were intercepted

in their return home, at the foot of the mountain *Bin-moir*, in *Berridale*, by a large force that had been collected on purpose in *Sutherland*, and above one hundred and twenty of the *Strathnaver* men were cut to pieces, beside some others who were drowned in endeavouring to escape through the river *Garwarie*.

1585.

THROUGH the rapacity of the *Clan-Gun*, great disturbances were occasioned in *Caithness* and *Sutherland*. The earls, therefore, joined in the resolution of chastising them with the utmost severity. *Henry Sinclair*, cousin to the earl of *Caithness*, was unfortunate enough to lead a band of men against the *Clan*, while they were strongly posted on the hill of *Bingrime*. The consequence of his too adventurous assault was, that *Henry*, and one hundred and twenty of his company, were massacred, and the remainder, with extreme difficulty, made their escape. The earl of *Sutherland's* party, however, being of superior force, pursued the *Clan-Gun* into the heights of *Ross-shire*, near to *Loch-broom*, where they made a stand; but, after an obstinate fight, were routed, and their captain or chief made prisoner, who was carried captive to *Dunrobin* castle. Upwards of thirty men were slain in the combat.

1587.

DISSENTION arose between the earls of *Caithness* and *Sutherland*, occasioned by the mutual insults given to each other by the chieftains on the borders of their lands.

ALEXANDER, earl of *Sutherland*, with a large body of men, came to chastise the offenders in *Caithness*, and went on pillaging to the town of *Wick*, which he set on fire. The earl of *Caithness*, with the chief of his followers, took refuge in *Gaernigo* castle,

castle, and were twelve days blocked up in it, by the invaders. But *Alexander*, perceiving that he could not compel the castle to a surrender, raised the siege, and, after plundering the country, returned into *Sutherland* with the spoil.

THE earl of *Caitness* was prepared to make reprisals on *Sutherland*: he entered it at the head of several hundred men; and, without molestation, seized a considerable prey of cattle, &c.; his return into *Caitness* was hastened by a rumour, that a company from *Strathnaver* was spoiling the environs of *Thurso*: and he was attacked in his retreat by some forces which had assembled for the purpose of rescuing the prey; but they were beat off: about thirty men fell in the skirmish.

THE following year, by the mediation of the earl of *Huntly*, a formal engagement of peace and friendship was entered on and ratified between the earls of the contending counties. And it does not appear, that any conflict or feud of consequence has taken place since that period, either in *Strathnaver*, *Caitness*, or *Sutherland*. Even the remembrance of such having ever existed, is happily now but very faintly and imperfectly retained.

ITINERARY.

	Miles.		Miles.
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Forglen —	7	Oldmeldrum —	12
Rothiemay —	7	Ellon —	8
Huntly —	7	Slains Castle —	12
Gartly Castle —	5	Boddom Castle —	4
Hill of Noth —	2	Peterhead —	3
Rynie —	2	Inverugie Castle —	3
Achindore —	2	Abbey of Deer —	9
Kildrummy Castle —	5	Carns of Memfie —	12
Kirk of Towie —	3	Dundarg Castle —	7
Glenkindie —	2	Troup-head —	7
Edenglassa —	8	Wallace Tower —	6
Ingie Bridge —	9	House of Boyne —	12
Monalterie —	8	Portfoyle —	2
Invercauld —	6	Findlater Castle —	4
Mar-lodge —	6	Cullen —	2
Balmoral —	11	Gordon Castle —	12
Abergeldie —	3	Elgin —	8
Glengarn —	4	Burgh-head —	6
Craigs of Boliter —	1	Findhorn —	6
Pannanach Wells —	2	Kinlofs Abbey —	2
Inn of Tulloch —	1	Forres —	2
Kildrummy Castle —	14	Nairn —	11

Inverness

I T I N E R A R Y.

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Dingwal —	9	Dilred Castle —	6
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Golspie —	8	Armisdale —	5
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Clyth —	5	Fall of the river Shin —	4
Wick —	11	Ferry at Invershin —	2
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PLATES.

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F RONTISPIECE: CASTLE HAVEN on *Tarbet-nefs*,
and variety of ornaments collected from carved Stones,
circular Towers, &c. &c.

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ERRATA.

Page	5, line	1, for portraits,	read	prints.
	6,	8, } Ava,		Alvah.
	9,	7, }		
25,	19,	after grove place a :		
31,	2,	for Bana,	read	Barra.
36,	21,	Pfoddom,		Boddom.
39,	13,	two thousand,		two hundred.
46,	{ in the head-line, and }			Morman.
	{ line 24, for Monnan, }			
48,	5,	chiet,		chief.
78,	22,	hundred fathom,		hundred yards.
82,	12,	Guernigo,		Gaernigo.
D ^o ,	20,	barrenness,		bareness.
106,	1,	after extent place a :		
106,	16,	for its parts,	read	their parts.
151,	22,	Syfterland,		Lyfterland.



